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DEMOCRATIC CONTROL IN THE WAR

POPULAR liberty with difficulty survives in wartime, but we are glad to find that Parliament showed itself very much alive on Wednesday. The great subject was the ineptitude of the military censorship and the muddle at the Ministry of Information. This muddle reached its climax on Monday night, when police entered newspaper offices and destroyed hundreds of thousands of copies of newspapers whose sole crime was to have published news that had already been released by the censor. In the House Mr. Greenwood made an admirable speech and Sir Archibald Sinclair followed up effectively. They elicited from Sir Samuel Hoare an absolute promise that this kind of thing should never occur again. But the issue is much wider than this. So strict has the censorship been in this country that Britain, which is supposed to be fighting for democracy, is less informed than most other countries, while foreign correspondents, whose sympathies are strongly with the democratic Powers, find themselves hampered at every turn in sending information abroad. The correspondents of well-known papers of neutral countries have been threatening to leave England altogether and do their work from less censored quarters. Dr. Goebbels has exploited the situation to the full and has given much wider telegraphic and telephonic facilities to the correspondents of neutral countries than has been offered them here. As a result, in some countries whose friendship is vital to us and where popular sentiment is on our side, the news printed has been largely from German sources, not because of misplaced sympathy, but because German news was available and British news was hidden. Allowance must be made for problems of organising a new department in a hurry, and we sympathise with Lord Macmillan's difficulties, but it is to be hoped that the fantastic muddle of Monday night will stimulate speedy improvement, and that the Ministry of Information may be released from the unimaginative domination of Colonel (and Admiral) Blimp and become what it is meant to be, a Ministry of Enlightenment, while the censorship is restricted to its proper sphere.

Another question with which Parliament should press the Government to deal promptly is that of the cost of living. If anyone doubts the need for strict price control, not merely of food, but of manufactured articles, here is a list of the immediate increases of wholesale prices in a few articles. We have not mentioned the names of the actual firms, though we have them before us.

Hosiery	24%	Rubber boots	15%
Furniture from 20% to	25%	Linen handkerchiefs ..	18%
Furnishing fabrics ..	20%	Carpets	60%
Cane chairs and baskets	15%	Paint	15%
Cheap electric fires ..	35%		

The Watchmakers' Trade Association have ordered an immediate increase of 33⅓ per cent. in the price of foreign watches already in stock (fresh importations are prohibited) and of 25 per cent. for British watches. These increases are being passed on at once to the consumer by "efficient" retailers. An excuse for further price-raising is the compulsory War Risk Insurance. This works out at 1½ per cent. for three months, but many wholesalers have been advised by Associations to increase prices 3 per cent. on this account. Some retailers are already announcing a general 10 per cent. increase on all ticketed prices.

The War in the Seas and the West

The Nazi submarine campaign is undoubtedly doing a lot of damage. It has been explained officially that this is unavoidable at the outset, before there has been time to introduce a regular system of convoys. Presumably the delay in doing this is due mainly to the fact that, when war broke out, our merchant fleet was scattered all over the world, and a large part of it actually on the high seas. Some time ago the Government itself published a map showing, for a particular day, the actual dispersal of British merchant shipping over the face of the waters; and it would presumably be fairly easy, even if courses were promptly altered, for hostile submarines to know approximately at the outset where a great many vessels were likely to be found. A convoy system should greatly increase security, though at the cost of slowing down to an appreciable extent the speed of voyages and causing certain delays in port. There remains, of course, even with a convoy system, the danger from the Nazi pocket battleships, if they are able to get loose. On the other hand German merchant shipping has been swept from the seas; the majority of vessels are sheltering in neutral ports. British troops, according to the official statement, are in France, but not yet in action. As for the French advance into the Saar, the extent and character of the operations are still left, no doubt intentionally, obscure. The Nazis will clearly remain on the defensive; and even if the French mean seriously to attack the Siegfried line, there has hardly been time yet for such an attack to mature. No rapid advance such as the Nazis could make into Poland is possible against the immense fortifications which cover nearly the whole Western Front.

The Campaign in Poland

Three factors have told heavily in Germany's favour on the Eastern Front—fine weather, great numerical superiority in the air, effective striking power of armoured divisions unimpeded by strongly prepared positions. As we go to press, the situation appears to be that, despite the rapid advance of the German "pincers" offensive, the bulk of the Polish army remains intact and is stiffening its resistance on the line of the Narev, Vistula and San rivers, though the Germans claim progress east of Warsaw towards Brest Litovsk. In the salient west of Warsaw a Polish force estimated variously as comprising five to ten divisions has been cut off in its retreat from Poznan, but is hotly engaged on a reversed front with the (probably thin) screen of German troops investing the capital. The key sector is now the area lying between Lvov and the Rumanian frontier. Here the Germans are endeavouring to turn the Vistula-San line. They are reported to be "plastering" the railways and roads with an intense air bombardment and to have crossed the San.

The Far East

News from the Far East is scarce. There are reports, as we write, of a big battle on the Mongolian border, in which the Japanese have been defeated by the Outer Mongolian forces. It is said that their casualties have been very heavy and that their line on the Khaika river has collapsed. From Tokio it is officially announced that important changes have been made in the Japanese military organisation in China; a unified command has been established, with a "General Headquarters of the expeditionary forces" and General Nishio as Commander-in-Chief. This, no doubt, indicates the intention of pressing on more vigorously with the operations in the "China incident," and it may well have some connection also with the "new policy" which Japan is evolving in view of the situation in Europe and in particular of the Soviet-German Pact. That policy has been under discussion by the Cabinet, and fuller information about it is expected shortly. There is no sign that Japanese anger and alarm at the "German treachery" have abated; and there are a good many signs (of which the lifting of the blockade at Hong Kong is the latest) that they are turning a hopeful eye on a renewal of British friendship. What may be the outcome of efforts to achieve that at the present juncture, we cannot predict; but it is pretty certain that any Anglo-Japanese *rapprochement* would add to China's unhappiness.

General Smuts's Task

The best contribution this country can render to General Smuts is patient and sympathetic understanding of his position rather than jubilant adulation. As General Hertzog appears to have protested, the lately United Party is rent in half, and General Smuts's half is very little, if any, the larger outside Parliament. Afrikaner Nationalism is still far the most powerful force in the country, and if it is sometimes bitter it must be conceded that enthusiasts of the British or "Dominion" Party are not noticeably restrained in their feelings. Memories of the Boer War naturally persist. Since then many Afrikaner intellectuals have been going to German rather than to British universities—which is not to suggest that they have Nazi sympathies. But intensely pro-South African feelings have often had an anti-British turn and do not even now stop to consider the distinction between Nazidom and the better Germany. The widely held feeling shared by moderate Nationalists is probably very like that of neutral America. In these circumstances it is unfortunate that General Smuts and his ablest colleague, Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr, are both of them intellectuals, neither of them having the popular and emotional gifts either of General Hertzog himself or of his more forceful and ambitious colleague, Mr. Pirow. All they can hope to do is to maintain their Home Front. Already General Hertzog's feelings have thrown him into the arms of the Republican leader, Dr. Malan, to the extent that he has appeared at Pretoria on a common platform of Afrikaner reunion—though he has also repudiated the extreme Nationalist programme of anti-Semitism and anti-everything else. General Smuts has begun well by discouraging over-zealous British enthusiasts, but his patience may yet be taxed from the other side. Age and long experience have, we trust, mellowed his old tendency to grasp nettles over-firmly.

On with the Shows

There is no slackening in the battle for the opening of the theatres and cinemas. The forces of common sense have already won a considerable victory, and early this week something like two or three thousand cinemas were showing in "approved" parts of the country—i.e., "reception" and "neutral" areas—and in the suburbs of London, at Palmers Green and Golders Green plays are being performed. The case for a general re-opening is really overwhelming. The effects of the closing order are deplorable alike in throwing a great number of actors and employees of all sorts out of work and in depriving the public of entertainment which it is vitally important it should have. The danger of collecting crowds in theatres and picture houses has been enormously exaggerated, and the risk is in any case outweighed by the urgency of providing people with some relief from the grim life which is now the universal lot. There is widespread agreement, too, with the argument of Lord Hugh Cecil in the *Times* the other day, that it is bad policy, especially in wartime, to encourage every individual to think day in and day out of nothing but his personal safety. The propaganda of funk can be overdone. It is not suggested, of course, that it should be "business as usual"; that is hardly possible in the centre of London and other great towns under black-out conditions. But afternoon—and morning—shows of all kinds are perfectly practicable, and we hope very soon to hear that the apostles of timidity have withdrawn their ill-advised ban.

The Control of Labour

The Control of Employment Bill came before the House of Commons on Wednesday after its terms had been discussed with the Trades Union Congress General Council. The T.U.C. raised no objection to the general principle of the Bill, which gives the Ministry of Labour power to prohibit the engagement of workers in particular trades and occupations. The principle that the available supply of labour must be allocated between industries in accordance with national needs being accepted, the problem becomes one of preventing this control from interfering unduly with the workman's right to change his job, or with the operation of the regular machinery of collective bargaining. In the last war, compulsory arbitration was applied under the Munitions Act of 1915 to the industries directly producing war supplies, and power was also taken to "proclaim" any important industry in which a dispute occurred, so as to bring it under similar provisions. There was, however, no general system of compulsory arbitration, and no general control of labour supply except for men of military age through the Military Service Acts. This time, the control seems certain to be much farther reaching and more stringent; and the T.U.C. and the Labour Party will be well advised to secure the fullest possible guarantees of prior consultation in the carrying out of the provisions of the Bill. If the movement of labour is to be controlled—as it must be to a certain degree—the Trade Unions ought to be given a recognised place in working the scheme, and existing mutual arrangements between employers and Trade Unions for regulating the engagement of labour ought to be used to the fullest possible extent.

Food, Fodder and Nerves

We in Great Britain have now to face the same agricultural problem as the Nazis have been facing for some time past—that attempts to increase the output of home-grown foods are apt to be at the expense of home-grown fodder for animals, and *vice versa*. The whole problem needs the most careful working out, in relation both to the cargo space required for imports of bulk foodstuffs and feeding stuffs respectively, and to the preservation of a properly balanced diet for the population. It will be a calamity if, in the endeavour to plough up more land for wheat and other cereals, we allow the milk supply, which has been increased by the measures of recent years, again to decline; for milk, in war as well as in peace, is the most valuable of all foods for its varied qualities of giving both energy and protection. Again, in developing vegetable cultivation on allotments and private gardens, it is of the first importance to do all that can be done to increase winter supplies, which are most likely to be neglected unless special steps are taken to encourage their cultivation. If we are to face a three years' war—to say nothing of even more unpleasant possibilities—we certainly cannot afford to face it on a diet of cereals and root-crops, even if meat supplies also remain fairly adequate. Milk, fruit and vegetables are essential for both our strictly physical and still more our nervous health; and this war will certainly be fought largely as a war of nerves.

The Economic Front

At the beginning of the last war the widespread adoption of the slogan "Business as Usual" was psychologically an error. On this occasion, in our transfer to a war economy, there is a real danger of the pendulum swinging too far in the opposite direction. During the past fortnight non-essential industries and services, particularly in the evacuation areas, have been drastically curtailed, and there have been sweeping dismissals of employees. Eventually, of course, contraction of all marginal activities and transfer of personnel either to the armed forces or war industries is essential if the nation's war potential is to be effectively mobilised. At the moment, however, neither the Defence Departments nor munition plants are ready to absorb personnel, and an undesirable hiatus is occurring in which many thousands of displaced employees have no prospect of early employment. This is bad both for public morale and for the nation's taxable capacity. The situation, moreover, is being aggravated by the Order enacting compulsory insurance (at the high rate of 6 per cent. per annum) for stocks in trades whose value exceeds £1,000. The effect of this Order on many forms of trading enterprise where stocks are costly in proportion to turnover will be paralysing and will intensify unemployment. There is a strong case for amending the Order so as to make insurance optional for all except stocks of goods essential for the nation's economic life in time of war.

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MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S WAR CABINET

IN the war of 1914, it took us nearly two and a half years to centralise the direction of operations in a War Cabinet; it is an illustration of the new tempo of affairs that in this war such an instrument should have been called into being on the first day. But the differences between the body created by Mr. Lloyd George in December, 1916, and that of Mr. Chamberlain are of great importance.

Mr. Lloyd George had a War Cabinet of five, only one member of which, Mr. Bonar Law, was, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, charged with administrative functions. The other members were set free from all departmental duties in order to give their whole mind to the higher principles of strategy, international and domestic. They decided all vital questions, and transmitted their decisions, after consultation, to the departments concerned. The theory of the structure was that a Minister who is charged with the innumerable problems of a great department becomes so immersed in them that he has rarely the time, and seldom the energy, either for the problems of co-ordination which constantly arise, or for that fuller perspective which enables him to see things beyond and above the miasma of departmental tradition and routine.

Mr. Chamberlain has only partially accepted the Lloyd George plan. His War Cabinet is almost twice as big; it consists of nine members, not counting Mr. Eden, who, as Secretary for the Dominions, has the right to attend its meetings. But of these nine, two only, the Prime Minister himself and Lord Hankey, are completely free of departmental duties; Sir Samuel Hoare, as Lord Privy Seal, is still responsible for civil defence (apart from A.R.P.)—a somewhat undefined field. All the services are represented, together with Lord Chatfield as Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence. Two ministers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Foreign Secretary, represent the more civilian side of the administration. Below them, there appear to be two grades of minister—one with Cabinet rank, like the Home Secretary, and one without Cabinet rank, like the Minister of Transport. No doubt they will be consulted from time to time; but they will take no part in the making of decisions by the War Cabinet, which remains, subject to Parliament, the paramount authority responsible for the conduct of the war.

It is obviously too early to say whether the Chamberlain method is better or worse than that of Mr. Lloyd George. A formidable case can be made against the model of 1916. The distinction between policy and administration is at best a very thin one. We know from an important speech of Lord Curzon's that the Lloyd George system involved a large expenditure of time in composing differences between the War Cabinet and departmental ministers. We know, further, that the making of policy by men who rarely saw its application at first-hand resulted in a good deal of friction and misinterpretation of decisions. It is possible that, under the Chamberlain scheme, a good deal of this can be avoided in the field of direct war policy on the assumption that ministers know how to run departments swollen to abnormal size and full of new problems. Whether they will have the time and energy for fresh thinking still remains to be seen. We must assume that Mr. Chamberlain has had the benefit of Lord Hankey's advice on this problem, and his experience is, beyond question, unique. But it must be frankly said, first, that the scheme is an experiment still to be proved, that the size of the War Cabinet is abnormally large for the coherency and rapidity of decision that war involves, and that ministers, if they are to make it work, will have, to an unprecedented degree, to delegate routine functions to their subordinates both parliamentary and permanent. We hope Mr. Chamberlain has urged the importance of this upon his colleagues. It would be fatal if any but the major decisions in a department go up to the minister for decision. If he once gets immersed in the *paperasserie* of his department, the system will, however great his appetite for work, break down.

We felt at the outset anxiety from another angle. The Prime Minister apart, the only representative of the civilian side of the conflict in the War Cabinet is the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Yet, during the course of the war, grave decisions will have to be taken on a hundred and one civilian problems, like railways, food supplies, the relation between capital and labour, the social services, the activities of local authorities, and so on. It was not easy to see how exactly a War Cabinet of Mr. Chamberlain's type could provide for their adequate consideration or for looking towards the immense problems of social reconstruction that will inevitably arise after the war. We cannot get down to them too soon. It is not going to be possible, when peace is concluded, merely to take up the pre-war problems of social reconstruction at the point they had reached on September 3rd. Does this Government contain men who can tackle such problems either from the short term or long range point of view? Are they adequately in the minds of the "Home Affairs Cabinet" which is now to be set up, consisting of ministers normally concerned in domestic matters, to be presided over, it is understood, by Sir Samuel Hoare?

One other interesting constitutional development is worthy of notice. The Labour and Liberal Oppositions—in our judgment rightly—have decided to maintain their political independence. They give their full support to the determination of the Government to defeat Nazi tyranny; but they remain free to criticise, to suggest, even to oppose the policies and methods of the Government. Since we believe that coalition government is not only weak government, but tends always to destroy the effectiveness of the parliamentary system, we think this was a wise decision. But the Parliamentary Labour Party has appointed three of its leading members to act as liaison officers between it and the service ministries, and one to act upon the advisory council of the Ministry of Information.

Properly organised, this system of liaison should be a device of great utility. It should ensure a proper supply of continuous knowledge to the Opposition upon subjects about which adequate information is essential if criticism is to be effective and useful. It should save ministers and departments a good deal of unnecessary questioning and debate. It should enable the House of Commons, where criticism, or even attack, becomes desirable, to deal with large principles upon the highest ground. We hope that the acting leader of the Opposition will continue to play a similar part in relation to foreign affairs. Mr. Greenwood has handled his difficult role in these last critical weeks with skill and success. He has shown that intimate knowledge from an authoritative source is fully compatible with an independence which compels the Government of the day to take full account of the currents of public opinion. That is what an Opposition is for; that, indeed, is why the full preservation of parliamentary life is one of the supreme aids to the winning of this war that we possess.

It is, indeed, essential to emphasise the important part Parliament has played in this crisis. As rarely in its history, it has been able in a thorough and genuine way to speak for the whole nation. Its free debate has been a vital source of strength not only to the nation itself, but to the cause for which the nation is now contending among the neutral Powers. It is impossible not to compare this relation between Government and Parliament in Great Britain with the relation between Hitler and the Reichstag. On the one hand, there is a government each move of which is examined and analysed by the unhampered representatives of a free people; on the other, a dictator announces to his regimented followers a policy about which they have no say of any kind. The nation has confidence in its cause because its Parliament is free to analyse that cause from every angle; even those who, like Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Maxton, think the decision to fight a grievous error, have had their full say. Once again, it has been demonstrated that the vitality of parliamentary institutions is immense, that it becomes greater the more the Government respects the right of the Opposition to put its point of view with all the vigour at its disposal. It is comforting, in a war against Nazi dictatorship, to realise that its first outcome is a new interest in, a new respect for, the House of Commons. The more profoundly the Government continues to make possible that interest and that respect, the more strong and enduring will be the national response to the terrific challenge it has to meet. For the way to preserve freedom for peoples abroad is to give it the fullest opportunity of creative expression at home.

OUR WAY WITH NEUTRALS

THIS war, as we all realise, will be a test of endurance. There is, however, a much rarer capacity, this time intellectual, that will be put to the proof. By our ability to detach ourselves from the past we may win the war or lose it. The tendency of the human mind is to expect that history will repeat itself. The savage believes that a charm that worked once must work again. The scientist stands firm on his feet only because of his faith in the uniform operation of causes. And in that spirit we all approach history. It costs us an effort to face the probability that this war, so far from resembling the last, may open a page of startling contrasts. Already some journalists and one publisher have used the phrase, "the second world war." It may be that, before it ends; we cannot be sure. It starts, however, as a war between one great Power and two others, with a Power of the second rank as their ally. So far from being world-wide, operations on land might conceivably be localised within the No Man's Land between the Maginot and Siegfried lines. For the present, at any rate, four Great Powers are neutrals, and in their shadow cluster in groups all the States that make our world. It follows that politics may play an even greater part in deciding our fate than they did in Mr. Wilson's day. What these neutrals think of us may matter in the end no less than what our sailors and soldiers do in defence and attack.

A dozen questions spring to our lips. Will America be liberal or grudging in the supply of arms, raw materials and foods? Will Russia reorganise her economic structure to assist Germany, or will she stand, indifferent and aloof, doling out the minimum of oil and grain in return for the prompt delivery of a bartered equivalent? Will Turkey open the Straits to our warships? What considerations will determine Italy's eventual attitude? Will Japan's formidable navy remain to the end inactive? And so one may go on, riddling the veil of the future with unanswered questions, addressed to many quarters, to General Franco and King Carol, Regent Horthy and the re-united kingdom of the Southern Slavs. If we allow ourselves to think of the settlement, we must not assume that omnipotent allies will one day dictate it. These neutrals, still neutral, may have their say.

Diplomacy, then, may be decisive, and so may be our handling of the world's public opinion. What deliberate propaganda can effect is questionable. Neutral opinion will be influenced rather by the view that its leaders, and notably its journalists, form about our mind and our purposes. As they judge us from day to day, so will these Powers, small and great, behave. They will be helpful or cold in their neutrality while the struggle rages; they may intervene before it ends, for us or against us. If, for example, we continued to treat American and other friendly neutral journalists with the perfunctory stupidity of routine that has distinguished our conduct during the past week, we might thereby do more to lose the war than by many military blunders. America is a democracy, which cannot in any degree be won by diplomacy alone. What Mr. Roosevelt, with the best will in the world, can do with a highly independent Congress depends on the impressions that reach the average American citizen in his home over the air and from his newspaper. We should attempt no propaganda. The essential is rather that we open everything, our minds, our records, our intentions—everything save military secrets—to friendly neutral observers. They will judge, but it is as well that they should do their judging in a good temper.

Diplomacy presents a far more delicate problem. A line of argument that would claim to be realistic instantly presents itself. "Once you are in a war," so it runs, "all that matters is to win it: the penalty of acting otherwise may be, not merely defeat, but ruin. Then, clearly, one must buy from the greater neutrals at least their benevolent neutrality and if possible their support as allies. One must, therefore, pay their price, be it loans and credits to-day, or colonies, spheres of influence and scraps of territory to-morrow. Only the head-in-air idealist can object." Well, there are two warning examples before us that suggest a certain caution. One is Hitler's performance of yesterday. He won, to what extent we do not yet know, the benevolent neutrality of Russia, and lost in the same instant the good will certainly of Japan, and probably, again to what extent we do not yet know, of Italy, Spain, Hungary and some others. The other case was our own in 1915 and the later years of the war. Sir Edward Grey concluded with Italy, Tsarist Russia, and several minor Powers a series of bargains embodied in secret treaties. These bought the support of their armies, some of them of doubtful value, and in return surrendered our right to base the settlement on an objective view of the world's good as a whole. The follies of Versailles are often ascribed to the anger and vainglory of the British and French electorates. But in fact the settlement was largely written in 1915.

Neutrals, needless to say, are not of equal value. Only a lunatic would buy Andorra at the cost of antagonising Spain. It would be nearly as mad to pay to any country a price that would alienate the United States. She is the neutral whose temper and resources give her an importance that surpasses that of all the rest together. When Chicherin published the Secret Treaties, he administered a severe shock to her more liberal thinkers. When, in due course, the bargains of these treaties were embodied in the settlement, America withdrew from Europe and maimed the League in its cradle. That experience colours all her thoughts about us to-day. She may feel for us a generous sympathy; she may hate Nazi brutality as hotly as we do, but she dreads a repetition of the disillusionment of 1919. She fears that diplomacy, on this plea of necessity, may sell every pass in advance and then too late erect an idealistic superstructure that could be only a decoration to amuse the simple. Like so many of us, she starts by assuming that history will repeat itself. In the quiet mood that prevails to-day, seared as yet by no hate and free from megalomaniac self-seeking, we are all resolved to avoid another Versailles. Then let us eschew the kind of bargains that made Versailles inevitable.

There is another aspect to this question of winning neutrals. When first America looked at our democratic front in 1914, she failed to recognise Tsarist Russia as a democracy. The Tsar by his fall helped to remove her doubts. There are among to-day's neutrals, as the recruiting sergeant clinks his shilling, a large number of Fascist and quasi-Fascist States. Already, inescapably, this is so far an ideological war that it is fought to destroy the violence, brutality and ill-faith of Nazism. In positive terms our war-aim is not merely self-preservation, but the maintenance of the values that constitute Western civilisation—humanity and intellectual freedom foremost among them. By diluting our ranks with Powers that know nothing of these values, we might compromise that supreme objective.

One may state this difficulty concretely. Most of us will feel that this war has ended in failure, unless it results in creating at least the nucleus of a Federal Union in Europe. Should we wish to include in it Powers that professed a strident nationalism, and laughed at any idea of planning across frontiers for the common good? Would it work if we did so? Some minimum definition of civilisation must guard its portals. It is nonsense to pretend that the internal political regimes of our neighbours do not concern us. If they persecute their Jews and their Left we shall be swamped with refugees. If they practise self-sufficiency, any hope of the international regulation of economic life must be abandoned. Finally, could the common affairs of a Federation be managed with any hope of success, unless they may be freely discussed on the air, in the press and at meetings within all its member States? We must envisage that debate, moreover, as a talk that can go on, without police obstacles across frontiers. Some of these neutrals, then, would not be desirable members of a future Federation, unless we assume some big modifications in their present way of life.

It would be an arrogance to attempt to draw up rules for the conduct of our wartime dealings with neutrals. Some bargains may be harmless, if they do not mortgage the future; but history has left its lessons that warn us what to avoid. By angling for the little fishes, we might estrange the greatest neutral of them all. It would be fatally easy to win the war by methods that must lose the peace.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

A LONDON DIARY

Consider the Government's statement that we must be prepared for a war of at least three years' duration in conjunction with Field Marshal Göring's speech last week and the article by Otto Strasser recently published in this paper. Field Marshal Göring confirmed Otto Strasser's view of Germany's strategy by saying that the Nazis were determined to polish off Poland and were prepared to wage a purely defensive war in the West, taking no notice of propaganda leaflets, but letting hell loose on Britain if a single bomb was dropped on German towns. I am in a position to amplify this picture of German strategy through information that reached me a short time ago from somebody closely in touch with the German General Staff. He said that the Nazis would attack Poland and keep completely quiescent on the Western Front. They would quickly establish a Polish Protectorate and offer us peace terms on the basis of that *fait accompli*. If we refused them, Germany would still remain on the defensive in the West. They hoped that we and the French would be foolish enough to make a frontal attack on the Siegfried line, because if we did that, we should sacrifice the lives of hundreds and thousands of men without any result and should then be perhaps more ready to talk peace. If we still refused and relied on the blockade, they would remain on the defensive until the blockade began to be really inconvenient. In that case, they would launch on England all the horrors that modern warfare could devise. This may still be a correct account of German strategy, but it omits of course the effects of immediate shortage and discussion in Germany which Göring was attempting to disguise. But if this is the German plan, it is all the more necessary that we should think precisely and exactly what we are to say if Germany offers us peace of a sort in a few weeks' time. I am sure that the line of simple refusal to discuss anything is bad policy and that the right reply is ourselves to put up to the German people, and to the whole world, positive proposals. We still stand as a *status quo* Power; our moral case before the world depends on our having a new and better order to offer it.

* * *

The *Evening Standard* published last week an extremely interesting account of a conversation with von Papen just after his unsuccessful visit to Turkey. I have made some inquiries and have no doubt that the story is authentic. X, whose name I know but must not give, asked von Papen if he was not disappointed by the Turkish refusal of Germany's advances. Von Papen replied that he was not troubled at all because the Turkish attitude depended on Russia. Von Papen went on to say that the Führer had now approached the U.S.S.R. himself and that he had made a decision. If his negotiations with Russia were successful, he would go to war with Poland; if they were unsuccessful, there would be no war this autumn. This story gives the best possible support to the view of the Opposition in this country that if the Russian offer of a conference at Bucharest had been accepted directly after Hitler's seizure of Prague, the war would have been avoided and that it was folly to guarantee Poland without ensuring an Anglo-Soviet Pact beforehand. There is still no clear indication of Stalin's intentions. Russia is partially mobilised—what for? The *Times* reports that the Moscow wireless still puts out floods of Marxist propaganda—which does not suggest, as some have thought, that the U.S.S.R. has "joined the Anti-Comintern front." Voroshiloff, it should be remembered, spoke of Russia as still being able to supply Poland and other people with war materials. Russia's surplus may still be available for us to buy; and we can certainly afford it better than Germany.

* * *

From a very reliable source I got the other day the solution of a problem which has puzzled me for some time—why were the sixteen proposals which Hitler read over to Sir Nevile Henderson intrinsically so moderate? The answer shows the devilish ingenuity of Dr. Goebbels. These proposals were, in fact, the work of moderate elements in the German foreign office, and were intended by their originator to be the basis of genuine negotiations. When Hitler saw them, he shouted that they were outrageous and he would never sacrifice the interests of Germany in this way. Dr. Goebbels, however, had different views. He said that those proposals could be used as a justification of war, fished them out of the waste-paper basket and had them issued too late to be the basis of negotiations, but early enough to convince the German people that they had been rejected by Poland. The 48 hours in which the British and French governments hesitated and made no clear pronouncement gave him just sufficient time to get this idea over.

* * *

I heard the other day of some sandbags (empty) for sale. I have no intention of pre-empting or getting in the way of sandbagging essential places. But if they are to spare, and openly on sale, why, said I, I can do with them. So I inquired and found that there was only one snag. Price raised 300 per cent. No suggestion of extra costs; in fact, no explanation at all. If you didn't like the price, you knew what you could do about it. And in North West London, where this occurred, there is already an angry suspicion that this sort of thing is getting common. Big profiteers must be dealt with by big measures; and I hope these are ready. But little profiteers can do immeasurable harm to morale and inflict great privations on the weak in limited areas. They must be dealt with too. Why not some Housewives' Committees?

* * *

People who expected big raids at once are adjusting themselves to the prospect of a long war and the possibility that catastrophic raids may not come for weeks or even months. Part of the adjustment should be immediate steps to improve shelters. A basement shelter needs three feet of concrete to be protection against a direct hit, and deep shelters should be built at once. All obstacles about timber and concrete supplies, whether due to red tape or other reasons, should be overcome at once. Spanish experience showed that buildings with steel frames do not collapse even when hit, and that basements, when improperly propped, are very dangerous, but that when given good walls and proper concrete ceilings, they save innumerable lives.

* * *

The Mayor of Barcelona said to the very end that more people had been killed in his town by the traffic than the air raids. Some of the new drivers with pasted or even pencilled initials on their cars are driving with an almost Spanish abandon; and though I know the value of war-time rumours, I cannot believe that the hair-raising stories told me by my friends are all baseless. And after dark it is even more dangerous. The other night a car charged the back of a bus outside the house of a friend of mine. It was badly smashed and the occupant's head deeply cut. First aid came with magnificent promptness; but my friend had to stand in the road in the blackness for thirty minutes shouting and waving his hands. He might not show the least light, and there were no other means of preventing other cars piling themselves up on the wreck. I am glad to learn that pedestrians are in future to be allowed to carry dimmed torches and that there is to be a relaxation of the absolute ban on the use of head lamps. I suggest that the authorities might also allow a limited number of dimmed lights at exceptionally dangerous corners, to be extinguished instantly (and if possible automatically) when the sirens go. Sirens to go as in Paris—when necessary.

* * *

What the B.B.C. says and does is going to be of immensely greater importance to the average citizen than ever before. Mr. Ogilvie's broadcast on Friday did not tell us enough; it dealt chiefly with the admirable way in which the B.B.C. had surmounted the difficulties of the war changeover. As we (quite reasonably) were not told what these difficulties were, I hope I am not being a Carp as well as a Critic in saying that the speech fell rather flat. So far as he dealt with the future, Mr. Ogilvie promised the mixture as before. I think he will find the mixture will need to be varied. What will people want? Dance tunes for lowbrows and good music for highbrows still? Or march tunes and chorus songs? What is the modern equivalent of the *Bing Boys?* What are to-day's *When Irish Eyes*, *The Long, Long Trail*, and *They Wouldn't Believe me?* If I were Programme Director I would get as many publishers' lists of 1915 and 1916 as I could, find out what sold them and then see if I got any hints about the public taste. But perhaps this is the wrong line of approach; what is really needed is "mass observation" of present public opinion. Do the people who now govern us and entertain us and who have led us into this horror, really know what the British public wants or thinks in September, 1939?

* * *

It is the oddest thing to see people walking over the downs or fields carrying gas masks; in my village a few days ago the children were climbing trees and romping in the street with their gas masks hanging round their shoulders! This is surely ridiculous and in this particular district they were told by a sensible official to take them off and leave them in the cottage or school building. People should not be allowed to forget the danger of gas, and gas masks should be ready to hand and carried on all expeditions far from home. But there is a tendency to overdo things just now. I saw one old woman carrying her gas mask while she stopped and gossiped on her next-door neighbour's doorstep.

* * *

There is much to tell about the mothers and children who have been evacuated from the big cities. One hears varying reports from different parts of the country; in some places things have settled down excellently, in others, where roughly brought-up children from the East End have come into quiet villages, there has been a good deal of friction. I hear of children with dirty habits scandalising their cottage hosts. Sometimes financial difficulties arise—when, for instance, the children's clothing has to be burnt or the town parents are too poor to provide money for boot repairs or a change of underclothes, and the cottagers find themselves forced by their own sense of decency and humanity to provide for their foster children. Two children I heard of, who had come from a large family in the East End, went on hunger strike apparently because it was dull in a small family in the country. The labourer, who was looking after them, killed a chicken for dinner, but they refused to eat it, announcing that they "wanted brawn."

* * *

The announcement that we were preparing for a three years' war caused a great deal of surprise. Several of the parents of children seem to have thought that they had only gone away to escape bombing last week-end and that they would soon be home again. Last Sunday there was naturally an influx of parents to see their children; they turned up in old taxis, in buses, on foot or on cycles. In my district they generally got on very well with those who were looking after their children. I have heard of many cases in which they wanted to take their children home. Of course, the authorities cannot allow the schoolchildren to return. The country is doing them a world of good, and this war will not always be waged at this slow tempo. The difficulties with the children will no doubt straighten out and the results will be good both for the country people and for the children. But I take a different view about the mothers who have evacuated with children under five. It seems to me that they must be allowed to return to their husbands if they wish. You cannot possibly make an arbitrary decision to separate women from their husbands for the duration. The women want to be with their husbands, want to cook for them and look after them, want to know where the money is going on Friday nights and want to know a lot of other obvious things. It seems clear to me that the mothers should return, if necessary with their babies, if they want to, and equally obvious that the schoolchildren ought to be kept in the country, however many difficulties have to be overcome.

* * *

One true story out of many. A mother with a baby in a big house is forbidden by a patronising hostess to go into the kitchen. "But I have to get my baby's food at the proper times." Hostess: "*I* will see to it that the child is fed when it is hungry." After much to the same effect the mother borrows an ancient perambulator, long stored away, and is enjoined to be very careful of it, etc. The mother goes out with the child and sees a passing London bus. She stops it and asks the driver if he can get her to London; she has not quite enough money, but he offers to make up the odd coppers. "But what about the perambulator?" "Oh, we'll leave the damned perambulator in the bleeding ditch." And they did.

* * *

Sagittarius contributes the following gem:

Now Bonnet is out in the alley,
Now Bonnet is where he should be,
And France is not singing of Bonnet
"O bring back my Bonnet to me!"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to P. H. Brodhurst.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

One defendant, fined £2, asserted he did not know he had to black-out the back of his house as well as the front.—*Birmingham Post.*

As one who is in constant touch with many boy friends, I would say that while most males welcome the short skirts now in vogue, they consider it most unsporting that the knickers should be so short as to be out of view except under most exceptional conditions.—Letter in *Picture Post.*

This dog, belonging to Mr. Sidney Bell, 11 Rosehill Gardens, Jarvis Brook, will refuse the meatiest bone if told it is German, but will eat it with alacrity when his owner says "British!"—*Kent and Sussex Courier.*

Would it not be more in keeping with the British spirit to give air-raid warnings in the form of amplified gramophone records to the tune of the "Colonel Bogey March" and the all clear with "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" instead of the dismal and depressing wail now in operation?—Letter in *Daily Express.*

We are delighted to hear that your hair is "coming on grand" as a result of rubbing in St. Philomena's oil, and invoking this saint. We do not know whether the result is chiefly due to the oil or the prayer, and we doubt whether the same satisfactory results would be obtained in all cases.—Inquiry bureau in *Universe.*

PRICES IN WARTIME

PROFITING by the experience of the last war, the Government has acted promptly this time in taking control of essential supplies and fixing maximum prices, both wholesale and retail, for a wide range of goods. In general, the policy appears to be that of stabilising prices wherever possible at the level at which they stood immediately before the outbreak of war. In the case of the more important producers' goods, the "controls" already instituted involve the rationing of supplies, with all the complications connected with allocation between military and civilian demand. In the case of consumers' goods, rationing, even when it is already decided upon, cannot come into force until registration has been carried out under the new Act—except in the instance of petrol, in which the system of car licensing provides the Government with a register ready made. If consumers had to base their expectations on the rations so far accorded to motorists—who have presumably in nearly all cases applied for additional allowances and are still waiting to be told their fate—we should all have to prepare ourselves for a starvation winter. But there is fortunately no reason to suppose that any such ill-fortune awaits us. Supplies of most commodities, if not abundant, are above the normal, thanks to the purchases made on Government account, after long delays, during the past few months. For the present, the consumer will presumably get an adequate ration of basic goods—whatever may happen to him later on, when the financial strain is more seriously felt and the extent of hostile interference with our shipping can be more accurately measured.

For the time being, the outstanding problem is that of price. It is of vital importance both that the Government shall be in a position to purchase its supplies of materials as cheaply as possible, and to control their conversion into finished goods by means of a thorough "costing" system, and also that the consumers shall not be exploited. This latter problem has two aspects. For a number of staple, standardised commodities, it can be settled for the time being fairly simply by central administrative action—that is, by Government orders fixing the maximum prices which wholesale and retail dealers are to be allowed to charge. But for a great many other types of goods the solution is much less simple; for things which are not standardised cannot be simply controlled by a rigid system of fixed maximum prices. Presumably, the Food Committees which are now being set up throughout the country will have as one of their principal activities the keeping of a watch on the prices of those foods which are not regulated by general administrative order. But there are many commodities apart from foodstuffs which will speedily go up in price unless some effective measures are taken for keeping the dealers in them under public control.

The question of price-policy cannot, however, be adequately considered except in relation to finance. It is a matter on which the verdict both of commonsense and of experience is beyond question that, if the supply of money in the consumers' pockets increases without a parallel increase in the supply of goods, prices are bound to rise, if not openly, then by a development of illicit trading. If in these circumstances the prices of *some* goods continue to be effectively controlled, the rise will be concentrated on the prices of other goods. If, by a miracle, *all* prices were to be kept under thorough control, the only consequence possible would be the existence of an unspent, and unspendable, margin of income in the consumers' hands. The Government could no doubt remove this surplus by taxation, but not, under war conditions, without inflicting great personal injustices between person and person. Alternatively, it could endeavour to persuade the consumers to lend it their surplus incomes; but to secure this would involve raising the rate of interest and thus seriously increasing the cost of carrying on the war.

It is clear, then, that the principal danger in the present situation is that the policy of keeping prices stable may be made unworkable by an increase in the consumers' supplies of cash. The additional employment arising out of war conditions cannot, in the circumstances, lead to a parallel increase in the supply of goods available for the public to buy; for much of this employment is in services, such as A.R.P., which produce nothing for sale and, for the rest, the Government itself must appropriate the additional output and also a substantial fraction of the supplies which were previously destined for the retail market. If the greater part of the further £500 millions which the Government is now authorised to borrow filters through, over and above the sums authorised before the actual outbreak of war, into the pockets of the consumers, incomes will be bound to exceed greatly the present money prices of the goods and services which the consumers can be allowed to enjoy; nor is there any possibility that voluntary saving in the form of subscriptions to Government loans will abolish so great a difference as is bound to occur.

These considerations make it imperative that every possible step shall be taken to prevent an inflation of the general run of incomes. In plain English, it is out of the question for the main body of workers—apart from especially underpaid groups, such as the farm labourers—to expect that the war demand for their services will enable them to secure wage advances without paying the penalty in a runaway rise in prices. If there is to be any chance at all of successfully stabilising prices at or near the existing levels, wages must be stabilised as well; and even so there will have to be heavier taxation, widely diffused, if spendable incomes are not to exceed the supplies of price-controlled goods on which they are to be spent.

If, however, the workers are to be asked to agree to stabilised wages—subject only to adjustments here and there—they must evidently be offered convincing assurances that other sections of the people are not being allowed to reap abnormal profits. Price-control, by itself, offers no adequate guarantee on this point; for it should be possible, in view of the conditions of the wartime market, for most employers in essential trades both to escape altogether the incidental losses for which their charges normally make allowance and to achieve considerable economies in the processes of production. When a firm can rely on keeping its works running continuously at full pressure, and on finding a ready sale without price-cutting for all it can produce; when it can ignore the Factory Acts in the name of national necessity, and dispense with many of the normal expenses of salesmanship and advertisement; when it can continue to buy its raw materials at controlled prices and its labour at the pre-war wage, excess profits will be bound to arise, unless special measures are taken to prevent them. This is a strong reason for extending the costing system to all trades as fast as it can be applied, and for skimming off all surplus as a contribution towards the costs of the war.

Certainly nothing short of this will suffice to persuade the workers or the Trade Unions that they are being offered a square deal when their demands for higher wages are met with a refusal. Yet such a refusal is, in the general run of cases, unavoidable if the system of price-control is not to break down. Similarly, it is indispensable that interest rates shall be kept in line with this general policy of stabilisation; for a runaway rise in interest would not only make for very great difficulties in the immediate financing of the war, but would also open a wide breach in the barriers against an inflation of incomes, and lead inevitably to demands for higher profits, higher wages, and higher everything else.

The stabilisation of interest rates, however, cannot be achieved except by rationing the supply of credit. It means public control of the banks, as well as of the investment market, in order to secure that the limited amounts of capital and credit that can safely be made available get into the right hands. Even if this is done—and as far as we know it has not been done yet—it will be a difficult enough task to keep prices and incomes in adjustment on the basis of stabilisation at which the Government seems to be aiming at present. Inflation is, in the short run, always so much the easiest course; and its disastrous consequences can be postponed long enough to cover up from the casual observer the inexorable sequence of cause and effect.

The policy of price-stabilisation is, we believe, the right one. But it will be unworkable unless a very tight hand is kept on the expansion of incomes, and unless the workers can be convinced that the profit-makers and the interest-receivers are not being allowed to benefit at their expense. On these matters, the Government has not hitherto shown its hand. Doubtless, some part of its intentions will be revealed when the Chancellor of the Exchequer produces his Emergency Budget. At any rate until then, anyone who has in mind the experience of the last war, or has followed Nazi financial methods in recent years, will be watching with apprehension to discover how far the Government is alive to the implications of its own apparent policy of holding the key prices steady at the pre-war levels.

RECIPES FOR NORMALITY

In those first few days it was the complete collapse of all one's normal interests that mattered most. For a moment the things one stood for seemed meaningless, the things one cared for pointless; what had absorbed lost its interest, what had entertained, its delight. One speculated excitedly about the war and contributed inefficiently to the blacking-out of windows and the filling-up of bags.

It seems unlikely that either the speculating or the "Arping" will continue indefinitely to provide adequate sustenance for the adult mind, or adequate occupation for the unpractical hands. The former is more than usually fruitless. Speculation demands some basis of fact from which to spread its wings in flight, and, so far at least as such citizens as remain outside the Ministry of Information are concerned, the mind operates in a vacuum of complete nescience. We simply do not know what is happening or what is likely to happen.

There results a devastated area of interests which it is the part of prudence to reconstruct. How should this be done? I suggest by a gradual resumption of the interests and avocations of normality. Not suddenly and all at once, but gradually, tentatively, and prepared for quick retreat in emergency, the waters of normality should be allowed to creep back into the empty spaces of the soul. Each time that one reads a book with absorption, listens to a sonata, looks at a picture, enjoys the garden, even if one does these things only for five minutes, one has gained a little ground for normality and cheated the war of the ground one has gained.

How can the process be assisted? First, there are games. Even in peacetime I would advocate games as the best method of keeping the psycho-analyst from the door, and as a prophylactic against war neuroses they cannot be bettered. Cricket is no longer available, but after having hit a tennis ball across a net for an hour and a half, I can vouch for the improved appearance of the world and the war. I can also record that I have never played chess with such delighted absorption as during the past fortnight.

Swimming, of course, is admirable, a fact which made the L.C.C.'s closure of the open-air ponds in London one of the major exasperations and minor stupidities of that hot first week of the war. Mercifully, some have now been reopened. Next to swimming I would place riding, but above both walking, were it not that the solitary walker tends to brood, unless he is prepared to tire himself to the point of exhaustion. "I have two doctors, my left leg and my right." It is thus—I am quoting from memory—that G. M. Trevelyan begins his celebrated essay, *Walking*, and proceeds to advocate the employment of the two doctors as a cure for the every sickness of the soul. The cure, I agree, is efficacious, but one must hurt one's body before one can relieve one's mind, and nothing less than the best part of a day's solid tramping will do the trick. This takes more time than most of us can afford.

And so I come to the best and most reliable recipe for return to normality, which is reading. Now is the time to take down all the unread classics which one had promised oneself to read in one's old age, and to re-read the read. What are the qualifications of the war-exorcising book? First, negative. It must not be psychological or introspective; it must not, that is to say, fix the reader's attention upon himself. I would, for this reason, eschew Proust, Henry James and even Chehov. Secondly, it must not deal directly or indirectly with war. Swift's *Gulliver*, especially the fourth satire, Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, and the Gospel of St. Matthew are examples of works which I should rule out on this ground.

Books which can be positively recommended for purposes of war-exorcism may be divided into three categories. First novels of action, particularly picaresque novels. Let there be a good story; let the scene be constantly changing; let the incidents be many and varied, enlivened with brawl and spiced with bawdy, and let the whole be interspersed with comments and reflections on manners and morals, and you have the perfect war book. *Tom Jones*, *Gil Blas*, *Don Quixote*, or even *The Cloister and the Hearth* are pre-eminent examples in this class. Some would add the *Iliad* as the best war novel ever written, but then it *is* a war novel. I am already halfway through *Tom Jones* and apart from the Man of the Hill's diatribe on the nastiness of civilised beings as "stinking much more to my reason than that of Hottentots does to my nose," I can find nothing to remind me of our present situation. Books of this type usually have the added advantage of being long.

Apropos of good stories which are also long, I am hoping to tackle a couple of unknown Hardys, *Two on a Tower* and *The Well Beloved*, before the end of the war.

Secondly, there is the class of books which specialise in what might be called general commentary on existence. They are the works of wise men talking memorably about life. I took up in the first week of the war Gratian's *The Art of Worldly Wisdom.* It is not so cynical as La Rochefoucauld, though bitter enough to reflect the background of one's prevailing mood. But it is mellowness rather than bitterness that one's system needs, and I suggest Montaigne. Shandyism strikes me as a philosophy peculiarly apt to the times, and a re-reading of *Tristam Shandy* is obviously indicated. I would have added a re-reading of Boswell's Johnson, except that, for my part, I have yet to read it. I had reserved Boswell together with Gibbon for old age and contented myself with the less formidable *Tour to the Hebrides.* But in this, as in other respects, it seems that I may have to anticipate my old age.

The only objection I have to reading the works of Samuel Johnson is that he is apt to be so disconcertingly topical. Listen to this, for example, from *Rasselas.*

> If all men were virtuous I should, with great alacrity, teach them to fly. But what would be the security of the good if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, mountains, nor seas could afford security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind and alight with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region.

In this category I would also put Pascal's *Pensées*, and any unread plays of Shakespeare. I am looking forward to reading Shakespeare.

Thirdly, I would suggest a work or set of works of large dimensions and acknowledged importance falling within one's own sphere. The physicist might take the opportunity of reading Newton's *Principia*, the biologist Darwin's *Origin of Species;* for the historian there is Herodotus or Thucydides, who *was*, prior to the signing of the Russian pact, when it still looked as if the war might be fundamentally ideological, rather than *is*, topical—or there are the published volumes of Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History.* Or why not Wells's *Outline*? For my part, I propose to myself the reading and re-reading of the Dialogues of Plato. Here again the only drawback is Plato's unfortunate lapses into topicality. For example, the Eighth and Ninth Books of the *Republic* describing the decline of the State and of the soul, with their terrifying picture of the soul of the democratic man, a taster of every pleasure, a subscriber to every moral creed, and an honorary member of all the religions,

> now fluting down the primrose path of wine, now given over to teetotalism and banting. One day in hard training, the next slack and idling, and the third playing the philosopher. Often he will take to politics, leap to his feet and do or say whatever comes into his head; or he conceives an admiration for a general and his interests are in war; or for a man of business and straightway that is his line

paint a more devastating picture of the pre-war intelligentsia than anything of the same *genre* to be found in Aldous Huxley.

I am not suggesting that it is easy to read books of this kind. At least it is not easy to begin. An effort of the will is required to dispossess the mind of private anxieties (I would have said "of public misfortunes," had not Johnson given me the courage to be honest with his, "Sir, there are no public worries, there are only private worries. Nobody ever yet lost an inch of sleep for any public worry"). But, the effort of mind once made, the author, if rightly chosen, will do the rest. And the effort has a salutary effect upon the self. It conduces to a fierce assertion of one's own individuality against the prevailing madness of the times. I have just read a book by Gerald Heard in which he bids me transcend myself and merge my individuality in the extended consciousness of the race. I have read many books of this kind in the last twenty years. In peacetime there may be something to be said for this merging, but I cannot believe that even Huxley and Heard would regard the extended mass mind of the moment as a suitable vehicle for the reception of their individualities.

C. E. M. JOAD

Miscellany

MUSIC DURING WAR

IT is to be hoped that the Government will give early consideration to the possibility of allowing concerts to be given during the war. It is, of course, extremely difficult at the beginning to foretell what the situation in London may be, but it is always wise to carry on entertainment and relaxation in the normal way as far as possible. The great majority of Londoners are and will be remaining at their work, and if offices, restaurants and traffic can carry on their business then surely it ought to be possible to allow places of relaxation and entertainment to carry on also. There are as many people gathered together in large blocks of flats or offices at night-time as in the Queen's Hall during a concert, but the chief difficulty is that of transport. It is obviously too difficult for people to move about in London at night-time as the streets are blacked out at present. But even if an absolute black-out is demanded of all buildings at sunset it ought to be possible to devise some means of intermediate street lighting which would allow the easy passage of traffic but could be quickly turned off on receipt of an air-raid warning. If this were achieved then traffic could proceed by night as by day.

Failing the normal provision of concerts in London during the coming Autumn and Winter, the task of filling this serious gap in recreation will fall to the B.B.C. The daily newspapers are already full of proposals for the entertainment of soldiers, but it is to be hoped that the mistakes of the last war will not be repeated. The quality of the entertainment offered at most London theatres and music-halls during 1916–18, notoriously so trivial and tasteless, disgusted great numbers of soldiers on leave. Siegfried Sassoon's poem, expressing the wish that a tank might be driven through a music-hall audience to give it some sense of reality is well known. It is not my business to criticise here the B.B.C.'s handling of news since the war began, but it will be a great mistake if the B.B.C. goes on supplying so much rubbishy "light" entertainment and neglects to provide really good musical programmes. The B.B.C. ought to have done something to replace the Promenade concerts immediately they were stopped. There is no reason why the B.B.C. should not supply at least one hour's first-class orchestral music every night. The light entertainment has for long been one of the weakest features of our wireless programmes, and those who think that in wartime such boring trash as is usually offered to us under the specious title of "light entertainment" is what the public actually needs are grossly mistaken.

Publishers have had the experience that in wartime the demand for so-called serious books increases. In the last war sales of poetry and general literature went up beyond all previous calculation. We are likely to find a similar development this time, especially as the temper of the people is far less happy-go-lucky and their minds are much better informed than on the last occasion.

Personally, I doubt if there will for some time be serious air-raids on London, but whether this proves correct or not does not alter the fact that while there are millions of people working and living in London adequate provision for their relaxation and entertainment will have to be made.

One of the ways in which this might be possible is by developing a carefully planned decentralisation. If the B.B.C. can organise six weeks of nightly concerts at the Queen's Hall as in the case of the "Proms" it ought not to be beyond its capacity to organise series of concerts with perhaps a smaller section of its symphony orchestra at a circuit of halls around the suburbs. This would not only be a valuable wartime service but it would start that long-wished-for movement away from the centre of London, a movement which every intelligent person has recognised to be desirable for a great number of years now.

Decentralisation is an absolute necessity to ensure a healthy cultural activity. A city like London, containing over seven million people, cannot possibly have one theatrical and musical centre to satisfy all the demands of its inhabitants. The West End has long ceased to cater for Londoners. Its theatres and even its concert halls—with certain popular exceptions—are chiefly patronised by the hotel population. The exorbitant rents, the cost of advertisement and all the other inflated expenses due to centralisation have long since killed all enterprise. The more critical and intelligent sections of the public living even in Inner London (to whom the West End is fairly accessible) have ceased to patronise theatres which mostly offer them nothing worth hearing or seeing.

But if, on the contrary, we get rid of the ridiculous snob value of the West End, which has no foundation in any real values, and could assist the suburbs, the different urban districts which make up London, to achieve an identity of their own and possess their own theatres and concert halls we should have done more to educate the public and provide a living for our artists and musicians than can be achieved in any other way. In this direction only is there any hope for a real creative and constructive activity in music and in drama. It is possible that the present war may at least do something to make this long-desired division of London into a number of distinct localities each with its own life-character a reality.

W. J. TURNER

ABELARD TELLS HIS LOVE TO HÉLOÏSE

Art thou not lovely?
Say yes, say yes, and doubt not,
Say . . .
What dost thou say?
But to me thou art full lovely,
So that I love thee
And would heal me
At thy fair fountain.

For thou art strength to me
And length of days
In life that is shortened,
Bright threads of light
In the dusk's haze.

Swing to! Swing to!
Swing shutters upon the night
That the light may here reign.

Such kindness thine eyes spray
Clear sight in my blindness,
Thou cleanser of pain!

For when I am with thee
What is death or ambition?
In the scent of thy being
All darkness is slain.

HERBERT PALMER

A PERSONAL EPISODE

Once I was walking along the street, and I suddenly noticed that women were not looking at me.

Not so long ago, I remember, when I went out into the street women used to look at me, and react towards me with sympathetic smiles, giggles and such like things.

And now all of a sudden—nothing at all!

"What a pity!" I thought. "After all a woman does play some part in a man's life."

One bourgeois economist, or it may have been a chemist, had expressed an original thought. He said that not only personal life, but everything we did, we did for the sake of women. So that all the struggle for fame, riches, honours, the exchanging of flats and the buying of overcoats and so on and so forth, all that was done for the sake of women.

In that, of course, he went too far, the dog. He made it up for the amusement of the bourgeois reader. But in so far as personal life is concerned, I entirely agree with him.

I agree that a woman plays some part in a man's personal life.

For instance, if you go to the pictures with her, it's not so vexing to watch a bad film. You can squeeze her hand, or say something silly to her. All this makes it easier to put up with modern art and the poverty of personal life.

So you can imagine my feelings when suddenly I noticed that women were not looking at me.

"What's the devil the matter?" I thought. "Why are the girls not looking at me? What's the cause of it? What do they want?"

As soon as I came home, I went straight to the looking glass. There I saw a very unhealthy face. With lustreless eyes. And without a drop of blood in the cheeks.

"Aha," I said to myself, "I understand it now. I must improve my diet. I must fill my drooping carcass with blood."

So I went post haste and bought all sorts of food.

I bought butter and sausage. I bought cocoa, and so on and so forth.

All that I ate and drank, and devoured without stopping. And in a short time I acquired an incredibly fresh and healthy appearance.

And looking like this I went out into the street. But women, as before, did not look at me.

"Aha!" I said to myself, "perhaps I've developed an ugly walk? Perhaps what I lack is gymnastic exercises, hanging on the rings and jumping about? Perhaps what I haven't got are big muscles, which ladies like to admire?"

I went and bought a trapeze. I also bought rings, weights and some sort of contraption which you have to whirl in the air.

I whirled the beastly thing in the air every morning. In the evenings I did all sorts of tricks on the rings and the trapeze. And on my rest days I chopped wood for my neighbours free of charge.

In the end I became a member of a sports club. I went sculling on all sorts of boats. I bathed until the month of November, and once nearly got drowned.

I spent six months doing all that. I risked my life many times, and cracked my head twice falling off the trapeze.

I bore all this like a man, and one fine day, strong and tanned by the sun, I went out into the street expecting to see the long-wished-for smile of approval from women.

But I did not see that smile.

Then I began to sleep with my window open. The fresh air entered my lungs. Colour began to play in my cheeks. My face went first pink, then red. And eventually even purple for some reason.

With this purple face I went to the theatre one evening. There, like a nitwit, I circled round various women, provoking rude remarks on the part of the men, and even some pulling and pushing. But there was no result except two or three unwilling smiles, which were of no use to me whatever.

In the smoking room I went up to the big looking glass and stood admiring my strong figure and chest which now measured about a yard across. I bent my arms, straightened my torso, and spread my legs wide apart, turning this way and that.

And I felt genuinely surprised at women being so capricious and so difficult to please. Or do they not know what they want?

And suddenly I noticed that I was very indifferently dressed. To tell the truth I was badly, almost disgustingly dressed. My trousers, were short, sagging at the knees like balloons, and when I looked at my feet I simply shuddered. To describe them would be an offence to literature.

"Ach, now I understand all," I said to myself. "That's what ruins my personal life. I dress badly."

Completely crushed, walking with my knees bent, I returned home, promising myself to change the whole of my wardrobe.

I reconditioned all my clothes. At post haste I had a new jacket made out of a purple curtain. And I bought a pair of trousers, Oxford style, made of two pairs of riding breeches.

I walked in these clothes as if I were enclosed in a balloon, secretly regretting the trend of modern fashions.

I bought myself an overcoat in the market, an overcoat with such wide shoulders as do not exist on our planet.

And on my day out, I went for a walk on the Tverskoi Boulevard in these clothes. I strutted about like a well-trained camel.

Women threw glances at me out of the corners of their eyes, with obvious feelings of surprise and fear.

Men looked straight at me. I could hear their remarks, rude remarks of uncultured creatures who did not understand the situation.

"What a scarecrow! Look how he decked himself out, the dog. He ought to be ashamed of himself. He's got about three miles of stuff on him."

Jibes were flung at me, and everyone laughed.

I walked through the boulevard as through two rows of bayonets, still vaguely hoping for something.

And suddenly, by Pushkin's monument, I noticed a decently dressed woman who was looking at me tenderly, and even archly.

I smiled back at her and, stepping proudly, walked three times round the monument. Then I sat down on the seat opposite her.

The decently dressed woman, with some remnants of faded beauty on her face, looked at me. Her eyes glided over my well dressed figure, and my face, which expressed every good feeling that it is possible to express.

I winked at Pushkin: the long-wished-for adventure was here at last.

Then I turned again to the lady who now watched me with unblinking eyes. And for some reason I began to feel afraid of these unblinking eyes. I wanted to get away. I got up, in order to walk round the monument, get on to a tram and ride away, anywhere, to escape these unblinking eyes.

Suddenly the decent woman walked up to me and said:

"Excuse me, please. It's a strange thing to say, but . . . a coat exactly like this had been stolen from my husband. Do you mind if I look at the lining?"

"Of course," I thought, "she cannot start an acquaintance without some pretext."

I opened my coat and blew out my chest as hard as I could.

The woman looked at the lining and gave a piercing cry. It was her husband's coat. It was a stolen coat, which I, the brigand, was now wearing on my own back.

Her shrieks pierced my ears. I wished I could sink into the ground in my new trousers and overcoat.

We went to a militia station where they wrote everything down. They asked me various questions which I answered quite truthfully.

And when they asked me how old I was, I gave them my age, and suddenly felt hot all over from being thus confronted with the truth.

"Ach, that's why women aren't looking at me," I said to myself. "I am simply getting older, that's why. My clothes have nothing to do with it, really."

I restored the stolen coat to the lady, and, lightly dressed, walked out into the street.

"It doesn't matter, I'll get along somehow," I said to myself. "My personal life will consist in work. I will work. I'll be useful to humanity. Women are not everything."

And so I went along, spitting right and left, laughing loudly, and turning my face away from passing women.

MICHAEL ZOSHCHENKO

(Translated by Elisaveta Fen)

Correspondence

WAR AIMS

SIR,—Mr. Kingsley Martin's article in last week's issue gives a welcome promise that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will keep sane ideas before the public of the Europe to follow the fall of Hitler. One hopes it will also help to keep us sane as to the methods of warfare to be pursued, since nothing is more certain than that our goal will be determined by the means we pursue. Already voices are being raised suggesting in veiled terms that we should start to bomb the cities of Germany. The *Evening Standard* on September 11th said:

> That means that we must wield weapons more explosive than pamphlets. The German people have submitted to Nazism for six years. According to the British Government's announcement they may continue to do so for three years more. Nothing less potent than hard weapons of war will smash the hold which Nazism possesses over eighty million people.

The suggestion is not as yet clearly made, but no doubt there will soon be a demand from this and other quarters that the way to wean the German people from their Government is to massacre them from the air.

Let us not forget that Nazism is an effect not a cause; and that many decent Germans have supported Hitler believing after the bitter experience of the post-war years that force alone could win justice for Germany. Believing also that in an increasingly autarkic world in which even the British Empire has put up tariff barriers, and in which the greater part of the world has all along been closed to German investment and emigration, the only solution for Germany was to acquire an empire of her own in Europe. With an almost pathetic belief in our own absolute innocence we are dropping leaflets over Germany seeking to convince the German people that if they will be good all things will be rendered unto them. But the German people know from bitter experience that if once they dismount from the tiger the lion will devour them. If we should now start to bomb German cities, even the waverers would be convinced that Germany's only hope lies in victory. The experience of China and Spain shows that massacre of the civilian population from the air unites a people in determination to continue fighting as nothing else can do.

The real problem which faces us is how to obliterate the past. Do we really wish to do so? Should we disarm if Germany disarmed? Are we prepared to promise the German people that, if they get rid of Hitler and cease from aggression, we shall remove the barriers around the British and French Empires and allow Germans to trade there freely, invest capital freely and emigrate freely? Or are we again, as in 1914, fighting in reality to preserve the profits obtained from the exploitation of the Asiatic and African peoples?

If all we are prepared to offer the German people is a return to the terrible economic conditions of 1930, our leaflets are not likely to wean them from support of their Government. But at least let us not adopt the bitterly ironic and terrible slogan, "Peace the aim and bombing planes the means."

Since the Siegfried line is probably impregnable, since Germany is less vulnerable to economic blockade than in the last war, and since Hitler apparently does not intend to bomb our towns until we bomb German ones, there will be a growing demand for Britain to start air frightfulness. Nor should anyone imagine that there is any real possibility of bombing military objectives alone when aeroplanes fly high to avoid anti-aircraft.

The essential difference between this war and the last is that both sides want to finish this one quickly. There is evidence that in the last war supplies were furnished by the British Empire and France to Germany by the interests which were anxious to keep the war going and so maintain profits. But the warning of the Russian Revolution and the fact that France was on the brink of revolution when the war ended have made the British and French ruling classes more cautious. Moreover, Germany is no longer a part of the international capitalist system. Her State capitalist system has removed any possibility of international agreements to make war profitable. In this war there cannot be any meetings of the representatives of Swiss, French, English and German armament firms to devise means for keeping the war going profitably, as Van Paassen (in *Days of Our Years*) has shown took place in the last war. Germany's economic life is now controlled not by iron, steel and armament trusts or by bankers, but by men whose lust for power is greater than their lust for profit.

FREDA UTLEY

5 New End Square, N.W.3.

SIR,—I have read with considerable interest the recent discussions in your columns on the subject of War Aims and Peace Terms, and I should like to express my unqualified approval of Mr. Kingsley Martin's article in last week's issue. Every thinking person must surely agree that for Europe and the world "the only hope lies in a federal solution."

Must we not then use all our influence in order to bring about the formulating and publishing of Peace Terms *now*? The German people will fight to the last man to prevent another Versailles. If they were convinced that we were offering them the *real* liberty that only a federal solution can bring, might not that knowledge be a very considerable factor towards shortening this destruction that everyone deplores? The Royal Air Force is waiting to deliver our letter.

K. B. BUCKLAND

109 Upton Road, Slough.

SIR,—Five days have gone by and still the war on the Western Front hangs fire. Even at this late stage, cannot the situation be saved? Now, while the peoples of Europe are able to peer into the abyss of unspeakable frightfulness, cannot something big and heroic be done to end hostilities and insure the kind of future which 98 per cent. of the people of all lands want? Is it necessary for these 98 per cent. to slaughter one another because of the intractability of 2 per cent. of stubborn, hard-necked ideologists and imperialists? Surely not. May I, therefore, plead with British Labour to seize this one chance of saving itself, democracy and civilisation by reversing its policy, calling for a cessation of hostilities, and for a conference to work out the conditions of a new world order which shall involve the abolition of Colonial Imperialism and imperialist monopoly. Moreover, if Fascism be the evil thing we believe it to be, it is bound to over-reach itself in the end. It is doing that already. Why, then, countenance the slaughter of millions of human beings as a means of hastening that end, especially when all the auguries are that the evils of Fascism will be multiplied in the process? I claim that the most effective contribution which Britain can make to world peace at this juncture is a declaration to end its own imperialism and to sacrifice its monopoly powers. Thus should we convince the victims of Fascist tyranny of our sincerity and win their co-operation for the ending of Fascism. Neither in war nor through war can a new world, a free, non-dictatorial world, emerge. Not until friendliness and whole-hearted co-operation begin to manifest themselves in the collective affairs of men, shall we see the promise of peace. Why postpone that supremely vital duty until millions have been slaughtered by reason of its lack?

12 Victoria Avenue, Quinton, WILFRED WELLOCK
Birmingham, 32.

SIR,—The line to be taken at present by those in the Radical tradition is somewhat difficult. The Labour Party and the Liberal Opposition have decided not to enter the Government but to give general support. The measure of support to be given to the Government must depend ultimately on a conviction that we are waging this war for a sound cause. Whether we could have avoided war is not now a pressing question. The matter that should dominate our minds is the object of the war. We are told daily from official and other sources that we must smash the Nazi system and restore the rule of international law. The latter proposition is clap-trap, for we cannot restore a rule that has never obtained. The smashing of the Nazi system is attractive to all (except Hitler's fifth column), but as a war objective it is singularly barren. We are not apparently asked to fight *for* anything definite. The reason for this is not hard to find. The "National" Government has not stood for anything worth having; it has a record that is deplorable; it has betrayed the things for which it now proclaims that we are fighting. The conduct of the Government since 1931 is explicable on one hypothesis, which is that the greatest good is the maintenance of the *status quo* and the perpetuation of Tory rule. Mr. Chamberlain and his friends cannot tell us that we are fighting to secure that Tory principles shall prevail whether the Tories are in or out of office, for that is a creed that is not acknowledged. Hence the resort to anti-Nazi thunderings: the Left have long realised that Nazis threaten their aims, and the Right has belatedly realised that their interests are threatened by the same Nazis; the Left and the Right can then work together against the common enemy. These tactics are far simpler than Hitler's, for whereas the Nazis had to create a common foe in the Jews our Government merely has to point out a plausible common foe instead of going in for invention. Personally I prefer English Tories to German Nazis, but if the issue is to lie between their systems, I cannot feel that the result is of great importance. Since the war is upon us, those of us who are not Chamberlain-Tories must do our best to see that the issue is converted into something of real importance. The best course is perhaps to press for an early statement of war aims. The terms upon which we would make peace with Germany should be known now. In the leaflets dropped over Germany there should have been a clear statement on this point. Hitler has said that there will not be another Versailles; can Mr. Chamberlain say that? The present Government of this country must be challenged to say what it offers; if it can offer nothing better to its own people than the probability of further wars, and nothing better to the Germans than another Versailles, it may become apparent that an intensification of party strife is the right course. Refraining from party strife does not mean that we now think that the "National" Government can be trusted, or that we have forgotten or could ever forget the dishonesty and futility of Simon-Hoare-Chamberlain foreign and imperial policy. It simply means that we are prepared to work under their leadership for an object that is approved. To define the object merely as "victory" should be unacceptable. The Opposition should do far more than see that the war is conducted efficiently; it must see that national unity is not created save for aims that are acceptable and clearly and positively stated. If the present Government cannot meet this challenge, it must make way for a Government that can. These things must be discussed now and steps taken as soon as possible. We cannot expect, with our memories of speeches about fouling nests, much indulgence at a later date unless our governors are made to see that they can no longer govern as if they were the only party in the State. R. M. JACKSON

The Windmill, Elsworth,
Cambridge.

PROPAGANDA IN GERMANY

SIR,—I am a German refugee who is enjoying England's hospitality. I am one of those who are interested in Hitler's defeat just as much as or even more than England. My friends and I have participated in the underground struggle against Hitler. We were thrown into prisons and concentration camps. Most of us are still there—in the claws of Hitler's ruthless gang. You will understand that we wish to do our best to help to overthrow Hitler.

Being a German myself the psychological aspects of the German mind are naturally more familiar to me than they would be to an Englishman. So I think that the leaflets dropped by British aeroplanes did not say quite the right things. There is not much point in telling the German people that Hitler has betrayed Mr. Chamberlain and the Poles, or that this war is unjust. It is possible that similar slogans would have some effect on the British people—though I rather doubt it, anyway this is beside the point. The German people react by saying—well, after all, deception of this kind is a common thing in politics. The swindlers are more clever and the cheated are nothing but stupid. The mass of the German people, the few members of anti-Fascist parties are of course excluded, will say that Danzig is a German town, that part of the Corridor is German, and that therefore England is wrong to prevent them from re-uniting with the Reich.

But there is a lot of other things to be said in the leaflets. Things which concern every German as an individual. Hitler promised to make the German people more wealthy—he did the opposite. Hitler promised to increase wages—he lowered them instead. Hitler promised to lower rents, and he left them as they were. Hitler promised to free the German "Race" and with this slogan he justifies his attack on Poland. What has he done for the South Tirol though? The truth is that in the South Tirol Germans have suffered much more than all the rest of those Germans who have been separated from the Reich in 1919. Hitler not only left these people in the lurch, he even handed over to the Italian police a list of those illegal South Tirolian Nazis who had congratulated him on his last birthday. Hitler promised to better the conditions of the German workers and now they are very nearly slaves. They cannot change their place of work. They work 11 hours a day, and even if they do get enough money, which is very rarely the case, they cannot buy the most necessary things in life. Already in the past years there was a shortage of food which increased to a great extent in the face of the present war. There are hardly any eggs, butter, meat and fats to be had. They are advancing towards an even greater shortage which includes clothes, dress material and several other necessities.

All this has to be said. Do not think every German knows it; he only *feels* it subconsciously but does not reflect on it enough to be able to draw the logical conclusions. Leaflets should be composed in a way to shake up the subconscious of the individual, they should make the reader *aware* of the facts so that he can formulate a judgment in his own mind.

One should add that Hitler does not fight the Poles because he wants to give something to the German people—no, he only wants to enlarge his industries and so add weight to the old yoke. As it has already been done before the leaflets should end up like this: "The English people and their Government do not want to fight the German people. The German people *must* get rid of Nazism; but when they have shaken off the oppressors a just peace will be waiting for them." And there is something else: The German people have not forgotten the Treaty of Versailles and its terrible consequences. They have not forgotten the occupation of the Rhineland and Easter 1923 in Essen. They have not forgotten inflation, starvation and the blockade which did not cease even after the signing of the Treaty. The leaflets therefore must promise a really just peace, the only condition being the defeat of Nazism. They must promise that there shall not be another occupation, that no part of Germany must be separated from the Reich without a real plebiscite—I am thinking of Eupen-Malmédy—that the German people should have the right to manage their own affairs.

I believe that these leaflets will be useful. Not at once, but after some time has passed. However, they should be dropped almost at once. There will be only few Germans at first who will want to help to crush Nazism. But with every new load of leaflets their number will increase.

The leaflets must have various wordings according to the different parts of Germany. In Kiel one has to appeal to the people in a different way than one would in Bavaria. Therefore I believe that not one person only would be able to compose them. The British Government should employ a staff of German anti-Fascists from all parts of Germany. Each of us will be willing to help. P. SCHNEIDER

SIR,—While wholeheartedly joining in the chorus of universal approval which has accompanied the action of the R.A.F. in dropping leaflets over Germany, I would like to criticise the contents of these messages of enlightenment on one point over which, as an Austrian, I feel particularly concerned. I am referring to the sentence which stated that "neither we nor any other land put obstacles in the way of German expansion as long as this did not threaten the independence of non-German peoples." This seems to imply that there could not really be any objections to the forcible annexation of Austria, that this act was part of just and legitimate aspirations of the Reich, as distinct from acts of aggression against, say, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Such considerations, however, are based on the acceptance of racial and ethnological criteria for the self-determination of countries, rather than of any other; an approach which seems in line more with Nazi theorisings than with those traditions of freedom and democracy for which Britain is now making a stand. If Austria were free to make her choice—if she had been free to do so in 1938—who can doubt but that an overwhelming majority of her people would declare for Austrian independence under the slogan "Los von Hitler"? Great as the unrest among the German people may be, it is clear that nowhere (with the exception of the "Protectorate") is the anti-Nazi movement such a popular and unifying factor as it is in Austria. It is no accident that the daily newspaper reports put the Austrians more and more in one category with the Czechs for their detestation of and resistance to Hitlerism. If this country is to secure the largest possible number of friends and allies in the struggle against the Nazis, it cannot afford to ignore so vital a factor as the Austrian movement of independence. Not only the restoration of Polish and Czechoslovakian integrity, but also the right of self-determination for Austria must be proclaimed by Britain to be one of the objectives of this present war. This will be but an application of the principles that have prompted this country to make war on the tyranny at present dominating central Europe. "AUSTRIACUS"

ART IN WAR TIME

SIR,—It is gratifying to discover from a study of your issue of September 9th that there is at least one periodical standing aloof from the gaggle of scandal-sheets that have become impregnated with war imbecility.

A number of us have no interest whatever in reading trumped-up stories of the Germans bombing open towns, and we are only disgusted by the allusions to poisoned chocolates and toy balloons filled with mustard gas—the latter must surely be regarded as a masterpiece of zealous enthusiasm on the part of the Minister of Atrocities!

It should not be necessary to stress the obvious fact that our quarrel is with Hitler and all that he stands for, *not with the German people*. But if some members of the penny press continue with their vicious propaganda, the few of us with sufficient insight to resist it will be fully occupied in trying to rectify wrong impressions.

Let us hope that this will not be necessary as there is other valuable work for us to do. I refer to the task of keeping the artistic side of the nation's activities as vitally influential as possible. The abrupt termination of the Promenade Concerts, the cancellation of the Three Choirs Festival and the omission of the customary music feature from last Saturday's *Daily Telegraph* all show only too clearly the direction in which the Arts will drift unless a determined effort is made.

It would not be at all ungenerous to describe the present international situation as the logical outcome of twenty years of consummate political bungling beginning with the Treaty of Versailles. The politicians have eventually admitted their failure by committing their people to the horrors of war, but by subsidising Art they might even yet provide the means by which the electorate would forget at least a few of the recent heinous political blunders—good policy surely from the point of view of the next general election. But I am forgetting—the war has to be paid for.

Fulbourn Manor, GEOFFREY SHARP
Cambridge.

THE NEED OF BOOKS

SIR,—The problem of employing the leisure of the evacuated children and parents is one which must, at present, be a source of worry to those responsible. The National Book Council would urge that the value of books for people of all ages cannot be over-estimated in this connection. With the lack of other entertainment, strange surroundings, and the winter evenings approaching, books will be more than ever needed and facilities for reading should be provided and encouraged by all authorities concerned.

For those, too, who have to stay at home, for hours of waiting and for disturbed nights, books will provide an essential occupation and relief. Authors, publishers, and booksellers will do their part. Do not let the public forget the help and comfort that is waiting for them in books. MAURICE MARSTON

3 Henrietta Street, W.C.2. Secretary,
National Book Council.

THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY

SIR,—The Field Studies Department of the Institute of Sociology (Le Play House) has removed from its London headquarters at 35 Gordon Square, W.C.1, to Albert Road, Malvern. All the Civic and Regional survey collections, maps, records, and Le Play House press publications are now at this address.

For many years the Field Studies Department of the Institute of Sociology has given help, advice and training to those interested in Field Studies conducted with a sociological and educational purpose in view. In addition to the frequently held Field Study meetings at home and abroad there have been specially organised Survey Schools, or Schools of Civics (for a series of week-ends or for a week at a time) where survey method and technique could be learnt and tried out with the help of specialists with training and experience in regional studies. Such courses have been attended by representatives of local education authorities, and University education departments, training college lecturers, members of the teaching profession, students and social workers. As a result the Field Studies Department of the Institute has helped to initiate and follow up with continued interest educational survey projects undertaken in many parts of the country.

The Field Studies Department can now offer from its new centre at great Malvern:

(1) Lectures and demonstrations of the Survey Method.

(2) Consultations, either by interview or correspondence, with help and advice, to those wishing to initiate local survey work.

(3) Personal help in drawing up courses for schools on Local Survey lines. Where it is felt useful one or two demonstration lessons could be given to get the course going and contact could be maintained.

(4) Le Play House Press publications of special value for educational surveys.

(5) Survey training courses—week-end or vacation periods—to be arranged from time to time as war-time conditions permit.

All inquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Organiser of Field Studies at this address.

Institute of Sociology, DOROTHEA FARQUHARSON
Le Play House,
Albert Road, Malvern.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE Poet Laureate has written to remind the book trade that during war people want to read quite as much as they do in times of peace. And with the dark streets and closed theatres, they will read even more than they did twenty-five years ago. But I do not think most people will want to read the same kinds of books as they have been doing. For several years books on the state of European politics have been best sellers because people wanted to make up their minds about Fascism, the persecution of the Jews, and whether a peaceful settlement was possible. This was the reason for the enormous sale of such books as Gunther's *Inside Europe*, and Douglas Reed's *Insanity Fair*. No doubt some books on European politics will continue to sell, but with the outbreak of war most people feel that their minds are made up: the Nazi party must be destroyed, and the German people liberated from their present rulers. Our minds are made up about that and we shall not want to find arguments in books, but a complete change from all thoughts of war. Different types of reader will get their form of comfort in different ways. During the last war the nostalgic longing for peace and innocence led to an extraordinary sale of sentimental stories. I remember in 1915 Francis Birrell and I shared a hut with eight other relief workers in a French village which had been destroyed by the Germans. Until our arrival its library had consisted of three or four Bibles and eight copies of *Freckles* by Gene Stratton Porter. *Freckles* is a lush story about a small American boy who behaved with ingenuous nobility and is the most sickly book I have ever read. I believe the trenches in France were littered with it. Its attraction was that it was full of the labels of the things for which everybody was longing. The same appetite, in those too perceptive to be satisfied by mere labels, leads to poetry being preferred to all other reading. Quite ten times as much poetry must have been read, written, and sold during the years 1914 to 1920, as there was in the years 1933 to 1939. For the soldier poetry has the immense advantage of being compressed: a pound of poetry may contain the emotional content of a ton of novels. We may be sure that the same causes will produce the same results to-day: stories about girls and children will sell in millions, volumes of poetry by the hundred thousand.

* * *

The prospects of sales I am afraid will not influence Siegfried Sassoon. Geoffrey Keynes has recently printed a tiny volume, *Rhymes of Rumination*, containing Sassoon's latest poems, many of which are as fine as any in the earlier volume *Vigils*. There are poems in them which would comfort and strengthen many people to-day, such as the lines addressed to his infant son, because they express with quiet perfection what so many feel but cannot say. For that reason I do hope he will allow a cheap reprint of this privately and exquisitely printed little book to appear immediately. It is possible that the desire to read poetry will bring many readers to what seems to me a very remarkable book which would probably fall perfectly flat in ordinary times. It is a poem of 422 pages—say 15,000 lines of verse—called *Each to the Other*, by Christopher La Farge (Cape, 8*s*. 6*d*.). It is the story of the emotional life of the hero, Tom, born in a family of American artists, who as a boy is on far easier terms with his grandfather than with his parents. Many of these early pages have the kind of fresh appreciation of horses, men-servants and sport which Sassoon captured in prose in *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man*. Tom meets his mother's lover and hates him with a healthy natural instinct. Later, as a young man, he goes with his father for a week's quail-shooting in a country house in the South where he meets an Englishwoman, Clare, who is in love with his father. On the last night of his visit Tom is restless, gets up at night, meets her in the passage, and goes to her room. This part of the poem, which is close to the theme of Turgenev's story *First Love*, might have been the subject of a whole novel. But La Farge describes the jarring relations of Tom's parents even better than he describes shooting quail, or a boy's first experience of passion. This is his mother:

> She was forever moving here and there
> As though the room she sat in had become
> Impossible, or as though some voice were calling
> Urgently through the escape of every door
> (Whose hinge was freedom and whose lock was but
> Unbearable closeting with imprisoned thought).
> She made irrelevant remarks and heard,
> Seemingly, their irrelevance, as if
> Some other person spoke within the deep
> And carrying music of her stolen voice.
> Then she'd look startled and afraid, her eyes
> Puzzled to understand how this could be.

* * *

His parents separate: Tom's emotional education has been the antithesis between love and marriage. This indeed is the underlying subject of the book and is never very far from the author's thoughts. Tom falls in love at a dance, but believes that marriage must always be a trap. The war comes. He goes into the Flying Corps, his best friend crashes and is killed; he crashes and survives. He marries Judith, they go to Europe and return, he is unfaithful in her absence, they quarrel and they have children. But the marriage is a complete and satisfying one, and their happiness increases until Judith's death in the hunting field in Virginia. An immense narrative poem of this sort necessarily must have many flat patches and many bad lines and there are numbers as bad as:

> Charles couldn't follow her realistic credo.

The poem gains however from the great variety of the verse, which changes speed and length of line to match the subject. The following extracts come close together in a passage describing how Tom recognises that his father's latest picture, a nude with the back turned, is a painting of Clare. His father says:

> It was nice to have you.
> I'd rather you left before the model came here.
> I promised she'd be alone.
> I said, "Remember me to her."
> He didn't answer. I didn't look over toward him.
> The pause grew horribly long.
> "You've got eyes," he said.
> I'm blessed if I thought you'd know; well done, my boy.
> "I'm grateful you didn't blab it . . ."

* * *

> I stood for a second longer
> Wishing at last I could see the expression
> His face was wearing. I felt a sudden flooding
> Sense of well-being run through the veins of my body.
> The bitterness moved in his voice like an autumn leaf
> Pierced by an arrow of wind from the bow of winter,
> It made my youth an eternity of fine years
> All for my happy spending.

* * *

> As I went home by familiar ways
> My head was full of the future days,
> And I jumped ahead and dodged my past
> Like the trucks and the cars and the trolleys.
> My heart was high with things to be doing,
> And to hell with women and all their wooing,
> So I'd get tight
> And I'd go to-night
> To the latest Follies.

None of these passages can be called particularly good verse. But taken together they form an extremely dramatic and exciting whole, which is due to their flexibility and rapidity. Once I started reading *Each to the Other* I found to my surprise that I could not stop. At the end I could not remember a single outstanding line, yet it was made up of dozens of unforgettable pictures, and I had enjoyed it and wanted to go back slowly, picking out what I liked best of the fifteen hundred lines. Only I'm not sure that one can judge the whole of such a poem by bits.

DAVID GARNETT

THE GRIGSON GALLERY

New Verse : An Anthology. Compiled by GEOFFREY GRIGSON. *Faber and Faber.* 6*s.*

The Map of Love. By DYLAN THOMAS. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

I respect Mr. Grigson, whom I regard as one of the shrewdest operators on the kerb-market of contemporary letters. When he calls Auden and MacNeice, Auden and MacNeice, and Stephen Spender Mr. Stephen Spender one knows that the distinction has been carefully made. For " Mister " is a hint to Stephen Spender that all is not well, and he had better unload his first editions. On the other hand, no other of the New Verse poets is mentioned in the introduction, there are no quotations for them, and speculators, therefore, are advised to bide their time.

Before I go further I had better say that, though my stock was once quoted without disfavour by Mr. Grigson, those times are past ; an unfavourable review of Wyndham Lewis according to some, the general decay of parts according to others, necessitated a revision, and I am now high on the black list. " It would not matter if the Cyrils and Raymonds were shot " read one advice to clients, " a literary farceur " read another ; and when at last I was given a full-length review, it was to be told that I was " in a mess," " carried about my coffin " (a social conscience), and was guilty of the capitalist vice of going abroad. So nothing I say is impartial, and yet I do not altogether want to get my own back because I enjoy *New Verse*, and I find Mr. Grigson's destructive criticism accurate and savage. But his praise is disconcerting.

His introduction contains praise, the complacent praise of an art-dealer, publisher, or schoolmaster-coach, for his little team. And yet not really for the team. Praise for Auden and MacNeice, scented brickbats for Mr. Stephen Spender (A. and M. are like Dryden and Pope, Mr. S. like Rupert Brooke) and general enthusiasm for the kind of poetry *New Verse* prints, and the editorial trend of it. Otherwise silence about the remaining eaglets.

What does Mr. Grigson exact from his contributors ? Chiefly that they should be observant and blokey :

> It is a fact that both an epic and a limerick are poems. . . . It is this fact which is accepted by the best of those poets who have written for *New Verse*. It gives them certain advantages. . . . It encourages them to observe well, and—it is Auden's terminology—to be good reporters. . . .
>
> As far as it is possible to judge now, I should say that there were no better poets in England, after Yeats and Eliot, than Auden and Louis MacNeice. Both have this exact, material view. Both are champions of common sense. . . .
>
> I agree with Louis MacNeice, " I would have a poet able-bodied, fond of talking, a reader of the newspapers, capable of pity and laughter, informed in economics, appreciative of women, involved in personal relationships, actively interested in politics, susceptible to physical impressions."

There, in those quotations, is Mr. Grigson's critical attitude, and the main reason why his anthology is so dull, and why most of the poetry of Auden and MacNeice is so perishable. If you substitute for " poet " John Gunther, Vincent Sheean, Vernon Bartlett, in fact " journalist," MacNeice's definition makes excellent sense. But the arts are not receptacles for reporting, they are expressions of the highest and deepest qualities of man, examples of supreme technique which are apart from the welter of journalism in which we live ; the poetry we need must be great poetry, not an affable verbal news-reel. Because Auden and MacNeice are excellent journalists much of their verse, with its flat and topical vocabulary, and slick contemporary thought is impermanent, as transitory as the effusion of any ego-bound Sunday columnist. Their best, on the other hand, is very good indeed, for Auden has genius and also the deep moral swoop of a great poet, and MacNeice the limpid lyrical excellence of the Greek elegiac writers—personal, vivid, melancholy—that he so often resembles. Let us have a poet who is deformed, bored by talking, a hater of newspapers, incapable of pity or laughter, ignorant of economics, unappreciative of women, free of personal relationships, actively bored by politics, insensitive to physical impressions, and see what happens. Let us leave reporting to reporters, observation to mass-observers, and common sense to Mr. Grigson. Some poets have done this, poor Mr. Stephen Spender, for example. " If Spender had been born about 1890, nothing, I repeat, could ever have saved him. He would have frittered himself away into vagueness and reaction." Like his contemporary, Mr. T. S. Eliot ? I feel if Mr. Grigson had lived two hundred years earlier he would have been a friend of Dennis or a figure in the *Dunciad*, and one hundred years earlier a critic of Keats and Shelley on the *Edinburgh Review*. To-day he edits *New Verse*.

Of the poems in this anthology, many are well known and some quite worthless. From the many admirable numbers of *New Verse* I think a better selection could have been made. The Day Lewis, Auden, MacNeice he gives are anthology pieces. Mr. Grigson's own poems proclaim him the greatest journalist of them all, and his selection of comic verse is unfortunate. Geoffrey Taylor, Philip O'Connor and Giacometti could have been left out altogether. Bernard Spencer reveals himself as a charming and delicate creator of English Still Lives, Barker as a serious poet who is becoming much less obscure, and K. J. Raine uses an attractive technique with imagination. I also liked the selection from the sensual Prokosch. None of these writers have any trace of journalism, and they are all pillars of *New Verse*. Now that I have made my complaint about Mr. Grigson's canons of criticism I am glad to add that there are many poets included who do not conform to it, and that there is one answer which will stifle away any adverse opinion of his magazine. " Well, what else is there ? " But this is not a book for the present emergency ; except for about a dozen poems, it is not up to the standard we shall require to see us through—and the photographs at the end are merely comic. I liked best that of Kenneth Allott (" Well, I must be getting back to the Lab ") and of Dylan Thomas, in whose pose invitation appears to struggle with satiety.

The Map of Love contains some poems and stories of Dylan Thomas (no reporter he) which are difficult and baffling. The early verse of Thomas had genius, one detected a dazzling and spontaneous rush of inspiration about the discoveries about beauty and sex which the young author made. His later poetry is often suspect. The technique remains, the inspiration gone. His being a purely Celtic writer makes his forgeries difficult to detect, but I think one can say that many of his images are nonsense, and that his hit-or-miss method is unsatisfactory, while his writing is inflated and faked. His stories suggest early Lawrence, or late Joyce, or the Celtic qualities of Synge. One feels it is a pity that he heard of Rimbaud. But the flashes are very good indeed, and if he goes on writing poetry long enough to become disgusted with his own facility, and to dislike the smell of rhetoric and violence, or his hare and tortoise race with George Barker, he might give us as good as Hopkins or Smart. But . . . but . . . but.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

NEW NOVELS

The Grapes of Wrath. By JOHN STEINBECK. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Lives of Wives. By LAURA RIDING. *Cassell.* 12*s.* 6*d.* (Publication temporarily held up.)

No Southern Gentleman. By MAURICE GRIFFITHS. *Rich and Cowan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Hudson Rejoins the Herd. By CLAUDE HOUGHTON. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Dark Star. By MARCH COST. *Collins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The story of *The Grapes of Wrath* is very simple. Prior to 1820 the smallest acreage which the settler could buy from the United States Government was 320, which had to be paid for at the rate of two dollars an acre and paid for in four years. Subsequent to 1820, however, the Government policy changed, and it became possible to buy lots of as little as eighty acres, and after the Civil War the policy was further modified and settlers were able to take up these small farms for nothing. An eighty-acre farm is uneconomic without highly developed local markets and without very skilful farming ; the Middle West never developed any sort of regional economy and even the smallest farmers went in for wheat as a main crop. The result was that the farmers were wholly at the mercy of world prices without local standbys, and the consequence of the unending cropping of wheat was soil exhaustion. After the war a succession of drought years accelerated the slow draining of the fertility of the soil, the top soil began to break up into dust and to blow away. The farmers fell into debt and failed to keep up the payments on their mortgages, the banks took over the farms. This is where Mr. Steinbeck's book begins ; the Joads, a family of small Oklahoma farmers, have had their notice to quit and have decided to move on westwards in obedience to the lemming-like compulsion which is the vestige of the American pioneer tradition. Like hundreds of thousands of other families, they buy an old car and set off for California ; their sufferings on the road and their situation when they arrive at the promised land where they find there is nothing for them but casual labour on an overstocked market make the story of the book. It is a horrible story told with passionate earnestness, distressing and moving, but completely as one is compelled to realise the plight of this human refuse in California the book has great defects as a novel. It is to be compared with Upton Sinclair's novel about the Chicago Stockyards, *The Jungle*. When Sinclair's book first appeared it created the same sort of stir that *The Grapes of Wrath* has made; the working conditions and the brutalised lives it described were as shocking, the case against the meat packers was as strong as the case against the fruit growers, and it was made with the same passion, the same earnestness. People were intensely moved by it. Time has stolen away its force, it is as wholly "1906" as an automobile of that year and as suitable for contemporary use. This old scandal has lost its urgency and cannot horrify one into forgetting that the same thing is being said over and over again and that the book ends when it does because the reader cannot be expected to stand any more. The fact that the sun will look on the puzzled, desperate and utterly defeated people in Mr. Steinbeck's book a few hours after it has looked on us tempts one to overlook similar failings. In form *The Grapes of Wrath* is astonishingly awkward; it combines the novel about the Joads with a generalised account of the experiences of the small farmers of whom the Joads are typical. These two books run concurrently and in such a fashion that a chapter of the generalised account precedes two or three chapters of the novel and forecasts pretty closely what is going to happen. Thus when the Joad family buys its car for the migration first Mr. Steinbeck explains how the Oklahoma farmers who go to California buy bad old cars which use too much oil and go wrong. Then the Joad family buy a car, and they talk about it and decide that they have probably been swindled and that the car is going to use too much oil and that they'll be lucky if it doesn't break down on the road. Then they set out and the car burns up too much oil and breaks down on the road. The Joads, moreover, are slow-thinking people, and they have to hear a thing several times before they believe it, and when they believe it they don't feel easy about it until they've told someone. But they can't bring themselves to say anything straight out; they work up to it by hints and suggestions, by devious back alleys which Mr. Steinbeck follows as enthusiastically and faithfully on page 535 as on page 35. Mr. Steinbeck makes his points with the delicacy of a trip hammer, the book lacks form and ends simply because the characters have reached the ultimate believable degradation and the length has reached the limit which publishers and public can stand. Pity and sympathy tempt one to suspend purely artistic standards, but this cannot be called a good novel. Its virtue lies in the burning sincerity which has captured the imagination of the American public and awakened them to the human aspect of the dust-bowl disaster. *The Jungle* is dead mutton as literature but it is alive in the American legislation which has amplified the Meat Inspection Bill and the Pure Food Bill of 1906, which the novel called into being within a few months of publication. *The Grapes of Wrath* will take a place beside it in the social history of the United States, but it is its literary fate to lie in that honourable vault which houses the books that have died when their purpose as propaganda has been served.

The sort of mediæval history which was compounded of the gossip of two or three generations would appear to have been the model for *Lives of Wives*. The mediæval chronicles certainly have considerable charms, they break off to speak of flocks of she-goats in the sky above Le Mans, and the dullest ecclesiastical intrigue is likely to end with an Archbishop in armour attempting to throttle a Sub-prior in the nave of a church while his attendants beat up the Canons. But it must be confessed that such strange and unexpected incidents tend to come rarely in passages which are consistently arid and which one reads without emotion. Alas, such breaks do not come in *Lives of Wives*, which has everything that the mediæval chronicles have got except what is marvellous or odd. The book deals with the times of Cyrus, Alexander, and Herod the Great; the marriage customs of the times permitted frequent change and, as Miss Riding explains, the men in the book are written of "as husbands rather than as heroes." The result is that one's head spins with the effort to digest many hundred years of polygamy, of industrious polygamy. However, after 316 pages of complex and gummy gossip one comes to an interesting and thoughtful theory of an historic Christ, but this only lasts until page 322, and the book ends on page 323. The idea which is advanced about the three kings who followed the star is brilliant, as is the suggestion about the intellectual exchange between John and Jesus, yet these exciting guesses are a small reward to the reader who has patiently followed the tangled random bedding of Imperial Persia, Macedon, and the client kingdom of Judea.

No Southern Gentleman is another jolly prattling story which is heavy with accurate historical detail. A series of fortunate coincidences brings a young English doctor into contact with every possible facet of the problem of slavery in the Old South. He is reading Dickens's latest when the new steamship in which he is travelling catches fire; he is rescued by a slave-ship and taken to New Orleans, where he attends a slave market, buys a slave, meets the bad types of slave owner, the good types of slave owner, and sees slaves receiving every possible sort of treatment. The doctor picks up corroborative detail the way a dog picks up fleas; if he picks up a newspaper the first thing he sees is a column of Escaped Slave advertisements, and if he finds himself in a Mississippi steamboat race an explosion is inevitable, a picnic he attends must produce a duel, and if he strolls with the Colonel's daughter down to the river what should be there but a show-boat and what more natural that they should attend a performance? People who like adventure stories and are ashamed to admit it will enjoy this book, which they will be able to call an historical novel. *Hudson Rejoins the Herd* is another disguised time-killer in which a who-shot-who story carries a great deal of richly bogus philosophy of the Sparkenbroke order. Hudson has been the victim of a shooting in a mews flat and he is in a nursing home recovering from a bullet wound and loss of memory when the book begins; a great deal of sententious heart-searching brings him back his memory and he finds that he has been in an even more sordid shooting than he thought:

> There is not a fear known to the heart of man which is not exploited commercially to-day. Fear is sedulously fostered because there is money in fear—and only in fear. Politically, the creation of fear is regarded as a master policy, because it is the one remaining means of obtaining national unity. Fear handcuffs a man to his fellows. It creates, therefore, only a negative unity . . .

As good as *Sparkenbroke*, perhaps it is safe to go further still, to say that this book challenges comparison with *The Fountain*.

Those who prefer their nonsense straight will like *The Dark Star*, which stakes its claim to deal with the world of dreams by putting in black and white as a headline from a newspaper: "Actress Causes Sensation, Rapturous Applause for Understudy," and making this success an integral part of the plot; there is also a financially successful Shakespeare season, and *The Masque of John Donne* draws a packed house on Boxing night. Perhaps it isn't a bad idea to keep a book so completely divorced from reality near your gas mask. ANTHONY WEST

PORTRAIT OF AN INQUISITOR

Torquemada: Scourge of the Jews. By THOMAS HOPE. *Allen and Unwin.* *8s. 6d.*

In the frescoes that fill the cloisters of the monastery of St. Thomas at Avila, one monkish figure reappears in almost every panel, unobtrusive yet dominant through its very persistence. Often it is placed at the Founder's side. Elsewhere, the same figure is depicted leaning as if in calm and holy meditation on the lowest steps of a flight of wooden stairs, an ascetic cheek pillowed thoughtfully against the palm of a hand. The face itself is haggard, but refined and delicate: it might have belonged to a scholar or a man of science, to the harmless and learned incumbent of a country vicarage—so sensitive is the drooping line of that Puritan upper-lip. In fact, it is the portrait of a Grand Inquisitor, Thomas de Torquemada, the Hound of the Lord.

Mr. Hope's study of this remarkable and alarming personality arrives at a particularly appropriate moment. Torquemada was a fanatic of the extremest sort—single-minded, selfless, rigidly self-righteous, possessed of the shrewd insight and the inhuman tenacity of the semi-insane. He had no pleasures, no worldly failings, no knowledge of friendship. Till late middle-age his life was obscure, distinguished only by the austerity of his religious practices: then his zeal and his abounding energy began to reap their reward. For himself he wanted little—neither wealth nor preferment. For the cause with which he had identified his private interests—a far subtler and more dangerous form of egotism—he wanted and demanded supreme authority, the power to enforce his will with absolute ruthlessness. Thomas de Torquemada was really devout. His deepest desire was to imitate in his own character the example (as he saw it) of Jesus Christ.

But "the Christ of fifteenth-century Spain was not the gentle Aryan Christ of the nineteenth-century picture books" so much as the fierce prophet who blasted the barren fig tree and with a whip drove the money-changers from the courts of the Temple—the black and gaunt-ribbed sufferer of Spanish religious art, whose tormented features are bedabbled with blood and tears.

Torquemada's disinterestedness is not open to doubt. That is to say, he shared with other great heretic-hunters, Jew-baiters and witch-burners of the Middle Ages and early Reformation a genuine belief in the dangers he set out to combat. The position of Christendom seemed still precarious, menaced by the subterranean growth of heresies (which once they had cropped up were hard to eradicate), by the spells and conjurations of the professors of the Black Art (who formed, as the author of *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* has already argued, a very definite and well-organised corporation) and by the corruption and venal laxity of the Popes themselves. Against the enemies of the Church, wherever he found them, and against backsliding Christians, noble or commoner, Torquemada raged with a flaming zeal; but it is possible that his anti-Semitism had a darker origin. Torquemada's grandfather had married a Jewess. Was his fury exacerbated by the knowledge of his own "unclean" blood?

Thus it may have come about that, although the Moors also had a taste of Torquemada's reforming energy—his presence at the siege of Malaga helped to encourage the pitiless reprisals by which the fall of the town was followed—the Jews remained the chief objects of his fear and hatred. For several years after the introduction of the Inquisition, he worked on the minds of King and Queen—avaricious Ferdinand, crafty, bigoted Isabella—to decree the expulsion of the entire community and, at the same time, cleverly manipulated public feeling. His methods have a strangely modern air. There was the same dissemination of virulent propaganda, reinforced by the publication of forged documents, the same attribution to the Jews of every disaster, the same harping on economic grievances. The Spanish Jews were hated because, all over the Peninsula, Jewish capitalists controlled the farming and collection of taxes; and it needed little to produce "spontaneous" outbursts of murder and pillage. Meanwhile the Inquisition—the Church's Gestapo—was diligently unearthing evidence of Jewish "crimes."

Yet Isabella hesitated to obey her confessor. The Jewish community was rich, peaceful, subservient. And not until the publication of the La Guardia Trial could Torquemada finally impose his will. For this trial one might find a number of modern parallels. During June, 1490, a party of Christian drunkards in Astorga rifled the bag of a converted Jewish tradesman, named Benito Garcia, who had been obliged to share their room at a local inn. Here they discovered a wafer which they imagined to be a consecrated Host. Garcia was arrested, examined, subjected to the exquisitely painful "Water Torture" and at length persuaded to involve other Jewish converts with whom he was acquainted. Step by step—each step accompanied by torture or threats of torture—a formidable case was built up against the victims, the centre of the case being a foolish and half-educated youth not unlike the alleged incendiary of the Reichstag Fire Trial. He it was who confessed to having participated in the ritual sacrifice of a Christian child, abetted by several other Jews, and in the ceremonial defilement of a Christian Host. Towards the question of his guilt and that of his companions, Mr. Hope (whose account of the Trial itself is clear and good) maintains a somewhat uncritical and ambiguous attitude. He seems unable to make up his mind as to the degree of credence that ought to be attributed to testimony wrung by highly trained lawyers from frightened and exhausted artisans, with the help of threats, promises, long bewildering examinations and physical punishment, continued over a period of almost a year. At one point, Mr. Hope admits that such evidence—the babblings of men fresh from the torture chamber and the reports of *agents provocateurs* who had been introduced into their cells—is, of its nature, highly suspect. But elsewhere he writes of "this particular crime" as if he felt convinced that the facts were proved. He agrees, however, that, even supposing a child had been put to death, its death could not have been laid to Jewish fanaticism and was the work of individual dabblers in Black Magic. But, for Torquemada, this was a specifically Jewish crime, to be avenged by the uprooting of the whole heretic brood.

Mr. Hope's book is uncommonly readable. As I have suggested, his treatment of the La Guardia episode is somewhat weak and unconvincing; and there are one or two pieces of information that have been allowed to appear in two different chapters—for example, the antidotes that Torquemada employed against poison are enumerated both on page 98 and page 217, while the story of the "wily and energetic young prior," who spent his Saturdays scouting among the chimney-pots of converted Jews to make sure that they did not dare to observe the Sabbath, is produced on pages 60 and 105. Some readers may find Mr. Hope's treatment of Torquemada unduly sympathetic; but the figure that emerges is all the more interesting for not being too highly or coarsely coloured. The Grand Inquisitor was no sadist of the vulgar type. His cruelty was deliberate, passionless and, given his own wild and horrid premises, absolutely logical from start to finish. Logical, too, was his contention that good very often can only be served by using the powers of evil to combat evil; and the inquisitors whom he instructed were taught that they must "meet guile with guile and hypocrisy with hypocrisy . . . on the ground that anything is lawful if it be to save a misguided soul, or to save a thousand souls from being contaminated by one evil soul." Thus, the examiner might equivocate, cajole, threaten, alternating between the roles of stern magistrate and mildly reproving father, *blande et mansuete* advising the penitent for his own good. Confession might lead to *sanbenito* and funeral faggots. But the soul, at least, was snatched from the burning, and the Faith was safeguarded.

In assessing Torquemada's political motives—for his religious policy had also its political counterpart—Mr. Hope is perhaps unduly kind. He sees Torquemada as a determined nationalist and attributes to him a passion for a unification of the Spanish Church and the Spanish Crown, which involved alike the expulsion of the Jews—a heterodox and disruptive element in the national life—and the modification, as far as Spain was concerned, of the Papal authority. In pursuit of these aims, Torquemada (according to Mr. Hope) was as courageous and far-sighted as he was inflexibly cruel. Whether we accept or reject this thesis, Mr. Hope's exposition of it certainly deserves reading. Neither sarcasm nor sentiment disfigure his narrative: he has been content to compose a portrait—he declines to enforce a moral. And Torquemada's career does not encourage moralising. He expired in peace and sanctity at the age of seventy-seven, full of the edifying and uplifting consciousness of work well done.

PETER QUENNELL

ONWARDS FROM DR. WATTS

Cautionary Verses. By H. BELLOC. *Duckworth.* 6s.

Mr. Auden defines light verse as the work of poets who "have felt in sufficient intimacy with their audience to be able to forget themselves and their singing-robes." It has often happened that people have written light verse who have not been poets. Consequently, we have come to think of light verse as that grisly, facetious stuff which introduces long words and an ingenious, jumpy rhyming scheme, and appears in *Punch* and at end-of-term school concerts: a little tumty-tum on the piano, till ready, and then a waterfall of Latinised English. There is a splendid example in *Songs of Sherborne School:*

> When King Alfred was at Sherborne, he revelled in "Unseens,"
> He never said that "Comps" were hard or dry,
> Repetition was his pleasure, and he spent his royal leisure
> In studying the verbs in μ ι.
>
> *Chorus:*
> So face Life cheerily, as Alfred did of old, etc.

I suppose that kind of thing is primarily the result of W. S. Gilbert.

Mr. Belloc broke away from the facetious tradition years ago when he first published his *Bad Child's Book of Beasts* in 1896. He was already a delicate, not over-complicated poet and he chose to base his light poems on the *Divine and Moral Songs* of Dr. Watts (1715) and the *Original Poems for Infant Minds*, by Jane and Anne Taylor (1804). The only difference between the early Mr. Belloc and Dr. Watts and the Misses Taylor was that the first left out the moral from the poem or put in a ridiculous one. The result is humorous verse which makes one laugh on account of its deliberate naivety:

> And even now, at twenty-five
> He has to WORK to keep alive!
> Yes! All day long from 10 till 4!
> For half the year, or even more;
> With but an hour or two to spend
> At luncheon with a City friend.

This may be compared with Jane Taylor's

> Soft his existence rolls away,
> To-morrow plenteous as to-day:
> He lives, enjoys, and lives anew,
> And when he dies—what shall we do!

The early semi-satire, semi-parody of Mr. Belloc depended a great deal on Lord Basil Blackwood's illustrations. When that talented artist was killed in the last war, Mr. Belloc was driven to writing humorous verse which depended even more on the verse than on the illustrations. His early training in simplicity enabled him to avoid the facetious. The simple *Who's Who* entry of Herbert Keane's, a minor literary man, shows this sort of poetry, not requiring illustration, at its best:

> Clubs: Handy Dandy, Beagle's, Tree's,
> Pitt, Palmerston, Riviere,
> The Walnut Box, Empedocles,
> Throgmorton, Pot o' Beer.
>
> (The last for its bohemian lists
> Wherein he often meets
> Old Wasters, Poets, Communists,
> And Ladies from the Streets.)
>
> A strong Protectionist, believes
> In everything but Heaven.
> For entertainment, dines, receives,
> Unmarried, 57.

I doubt if there are better humorous verse writers in England than Mr. Belloc. He has all the qualities needed—brevity, well-sounding lines, quotability, and simplicity. He is never facetious, never obscure, and he makes nice use of the unexpected:

> During a late election Lord
> Roehampton strained a vocal chord.

I used to be told, during the process of education, that to laugh is light, not to laugh is deep: that depth got you on in examinations and the Civil Services, lightness was definitely gamma and got you nowhere. The only sort of lightness permitted was post-examination gymnastics, verse of the A. D. Godley type. Mr. Belloc was a Brackenbury Scholar and got a first in History, and he has yet produced a simple form of light verse of his own, which all can understand.

This volume, which claims to be the collected humorous poems of H. Belloc, does not include all his humorous poems, some of the best of which are to be found in *Sonnets and Verse* (Duckworth, 7*s.* 6*d.*) This book is, in fact, a reprint of those familiar large octavos for children, without the illustrations. Many of the lines refer to drawings which are not to be found in the book. Despite these disadvantages, here are nearly two hundred pages of excellent light verse.

JOHN BETJEMAN

ANGLO-AMERICAN

An Anglo-American Interpreter. A Vocabulary and Phrase Book. Compiled by H. W. HORWILL. *Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.*

Mr. Horwill's phrase book reminds us that American is a foreign language. We know, of course, even if we have never been there, that in New York cars drive along the pavement, that a first floor is on a level with the street, that dessert is the sweet course and not the fruit. If we are not too snobbish, we can soon adapt ourselves to saying boots where we are used to shoes, pie for tart, solicitor for canvasser, and so on. But beyond that, there is a whole American language, more divergent from our own than might have been supposed. I had never discovered, for example, from books or films, that a shirt front becomes a bosom when one crosses the Atlantic, and there are other discoveries as surprising.

Sometimes it is an old English word which has dropped out of our own speech. "Gotten" is well known; and Mr. Horwill's lists contain other examples. Crib (for cot), haberdasher (men's outfitter), the front stoop (steps), bill of lading (consignment note), vest (waistcoat), egg-plant (aubergine), roast (joint), jeopard (jeopardise): in each case the older word is American and not common English usage. This is the aspect of American that appeals specially to etymologists and to snobs—to those who would shudder, for example, at the word "glimpse" used as a verb. It seems more reasonable to prefer the pithier word however it has been come by, and I have no doubt that in ten years' time "glimpse" will be welcomed as a short-cut even by purists. Reading the pages of Mr. Horwill's little book one is struck by the fact that while many Americanisms are admirably terse (how good "bud" is for our "debutante"!), others are pompous or ramshackle. One understands, however much one may dislike, the national trait which can turn a barber into a tonsorial artist, but how explain such clumsy phrases as "check up on," or "make a getaway," where "get away" is easier and better? This last habit, unfortunately, is being borrowed into English.

An Anglo-American Interpreter gives the impression that American phrasing is far more clipped and vivid than English. No doubt this is true, but the difference has been exaggerated by Mr. Horwill, who prints on the American side a number of phrases which are current in England (glad rags, dutch treat), while he tends to make English seem more stilted than it is. I have never heard anyone say, "There are several Humane Society men on the beach," and I suspect that before the word "life-saver" came in, people found a less starched way than Mr. Horwill's of mentioning them. Nevertheless, in general, American wins by its wiriness and inexhaustible sources of slang. It is for that reason that Mr. Horwill's phrase book, which is intended to give tips to travellers, is fascinating to dip in.

G. W. STONIER

MR. DE LA MARE'S ANTHOLOGY OF DREAM

Behold, This Dreamer! By WALTER DE LA MARE. *Faber. 21s.*

The province chosen by Mr. De La Mare is a wide one. He is concerned not only with sleep, the state of dreaming and death, but also with fantasy and the imagination and with the poet who reveals their value. Thus he proceeds from the most direct interpretation of his subject such as Sir Philip Sidney's invocation to sleep or the fantasies of Coleridge to Darley's "It is not Beauty I demand" or Wordsworth's defence of intuition. His theme is Vision, whether that of the artist or the dreamer, and whether received in sleeping or in waking hours.

In the long essay which forms the first part of his book, and which is itself rich in dreams, moons, visions and summer nights, Mr. De La Mare throws light upon his method of selection and

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W. M. Thackeray, "THE VIRGINIANS"

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upon his reason for certain exclusions. He has used both poetry and prose extracts, but, as he explains, it is upon the poetry that he principally relies to illuminate his theme. The prose passages range from Leonardo, the Bible, and Sir Thomas Browne to Havelock Ellis, Whitehead and Frederick Greenwood, the author of *Imagination in Dreams*. Beautiful, curious or analytical, they include extracts from Plato, Florio's Montaigne, Donne, George Borrow and Gilbert White. Yet one has the impression that Mr. De La Mare has included some of them out of a sense of duty: to elucidate for the dull what is implicit in the poems. As he himself says, he has been frugal with the bread. "The quartern loaves of psychology . . . are difficult to cut into adequate and truly representative slices" and "Science is fare for the day-mind rather than for that of the night." So we find that although the psychologists are not altogether excluded, Mr. De La Mare has preferred those passages which underline their limitations—passages, for instance, from Havelock Ellis, Whitehead and Edwin Muir. For he is primarily interested in dreams as immediate experience. The value of a dream for him lies in its vividness and beauty. Its peculiar quality disappears with analysis. And he reminds us that besides Freud's Blatant Beast in the cellar, "there is also a caged bird in the attic, and one of a marvellous song." Since dreams, like history, can be fitted into any framework which the ingenious may construct, let us enjoy or dread them for themselves alone.

Mr. De La Mare allows little space to the dream which is artificially induced. Poe and de Quincey are sparingly quoted, Baudelaire and Cocteau not at all. (Though the latter omissions may be due to the fact that Mr. De La Mare has avoided translations wherever possible, wishing, one presumes, to reproduce the dream or poem in all its original sharpness.) He prefers the dream or trance of meditation which falls naturally on the poet or sleeper. So here are Cowley, Peacock and Hardy to sing of daydreams; Darley, Mangan and Christina Rossetti to tread the strange borderland between two worlds; Coleridge, Keats and Thomson bringing the very stuff of dreams; Sidney, Darley and Auden evoking sleep; Drayton, Drummond and Shakespeare with dreams of the beloved; Blake, Wordsworth and Flaubert to describe the artist's vision; Vaughan and King with intimations of immortality; and Webster, Tourneur, Donne and Beddoes on death itself. If Mr. De La Mare exhibits any special preferences other than for the apostles of dream like Blake, Coleridge and Christina Rossetti, they are for Darley, Drummond and Beddoes. Incidentally, the generous selection from Darley is one of the pleasantest features of the book. MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

SWIFT, THE CLERGYMAN

Jonathan Swift. Dean and Pastor. By ROBERT WYSE JACKSON, LL.D. *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.* 6s.

The literary legend of Swift has been gaining momentum in recent years. Biographers, including Stephen Gwynn, Shane Leslie, Rossi and Hone, Bernard Newman, Edith Sitwell, Van Doren, Quintana, Looten, Yeats in drama and symbol, all have added something to the great modern myth. Despite its modest title, this book is a vigorous piece of work, and a belief that the modern view of Swift is mainly sensational has given force and point to Dr. Jackson's arguments. Dr. Jackson has one advantage over better-known biographers. He writes from an Irish rectory and he knows the Irish countryside where traditions die hard. One of the best chapters in his book is a reconstruction of Swift's life at Laracor. Dr. Jackson has not only gone to contemporary documents, such as the Visitation of the Dioceses made in 1723, but has collected the folklore which still lingers around Swift's name in Co. Meath. The memory of Roger Cox, the parish clerk, figures largely in those vague traditional jokes which are associated with Swift as a clergyman; and "Big Doughty," the local giant, who is supposed to have inspired *Gulliver's Travels*, is still remembered. Quilca, where Swift often spent a summer holiday, is still crowded with associations, and local names, such as Stella's Bower, Swift's Island, are a tribute to his interest in landscape-gardening.

Only a small part of Swift's life was devoted to writing, but the thirty-two years which he spent as Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin have been ignored by literary biographers. Dr. Jackson has had access to the Manuscript archives of the Cathedral and has examined contemporary receipt books, Chapter Minutes and Deanery Scrapbooks. He has also gone to eighteenth-century Dublin newspapers. The result of his labour is a very vivid study of Swift as Dean, lacking in sensational drama, no doubt, but by no means dull, for nothing regarding "St. Patrick's Saucy Dean" can be dull. Swift's powers of organisation, financial skill and daily conscienciousness needed a tribute such as this. At a time when ecclesiastical matters in Ireland were too often in a disgraceful state, Swift, for all his eccentricities, gave an example of complete integrity.

Dr. Jackson deals with the central riddle of Swift's character, but his interpretation may disappoint those who insist on viewing the Stella-Vanessa problem through the coloured glass of modern romanticism. His view does not differ greatly from the shrewd popular tradition which still lingers in the Dublin Liberties. That popular tradition derives Swift's rancour from his failure to attain ecclesiastical preferment. AUSTIN CLARKE

Harris of Japan. By CARL CROW. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12s. 6d.

Carl Crow has written a most entertaining story round the life of Townsend Harris, the New York merchant, who became unofficial intermediary between the United States and Japan. He knows Japan almost as well as he knows China and writes about it with the same skill. Townsend Harris became first American Consul in 1855 though he acted in that capacity for a long time without funds, instructions, or even official recognition from Washington. Harris liked his self-appointed responsibility and, pending the date when the U.S. Government should appreciate his efforts on their behalf, enjoyed himself immensely in the role of amateur diplomat. The great achievement of his career, once it had become official, was the signing of the treaty between Japan and U.S.A. The descendants of the sun were still averse from opening their country to the outside world. Harris more or less forced his company upon the unwilling and resentful Japanese, lived among them, learnt their system of thinking and then entered into the battle of wits which ensued over the Treaty Rights. Harris added his knowledge of the Japanese to his own indomitable American temperament and the combination was devastating to the isolationists. Instead of avenging the intrusion, the Japanese actually elevated the American among their household gods. Even to-day the enigmatic American is spoken of with respect. Harris had a flair for intrigue and an extremely subtle sense of humour. He managed to play the Japanese at their own game and beat them. Some of his adventures read like a crazy burlesque. Mr. Crow enjoys the follies of human nature and the fantastic course of events in Harris's career, and he sets them down with a relish and a personal enjoyment quite apart from his usual journalistic skill. The contrast in diplomatic methods and the clash of national mentalities are cleverly described. One is impressed by the ceremonious solemnity of the Japanese who lack humour where they themselves are concerned. In contrast to this are the distinct methods of the American and the English, the one combining vital energy with shrewd wit and assurance and the other trying to combine force with pomposity.

An Outline of International Price Theories. By CHI-YUEN WU. With an Introduction by PROFESSOR LIONEL ROBBINS. *Routledge.* 15s.

This is a doctoral thesis, meant for trained economists, by a Chinese student of the London School of Economics. It is a thoroughly competent piece of work, valuable for its historical survey of the main theories from the early Mercantilists to contemporary writers such as Professor Ohlin and Professor Haberler. It deals very briefly with the earlier theories, gives a good summary of the "classical" doctrines from Hume to John Stuart Mill, with special emphasis on Nassau Senior as well as Ricardo, summarises adequately the various restatements of the "classical" views from the controversies which followed the Australian and Californian gold discoveries to those of the period immediately before the war, and proceeds to a careful consideration of post-war theories, with special emphasis on the views of Professor Ohlin, and on the influence of currency depreciation on the more recent doctrines. There is an excellent bibliography.

The Exploitation of East Africa, 1856-90—The Slave Trade and the Scramble. By R. COUPLAND. *Faber and Faber.* 25s.

Following hard on the same author's *East Africa and its Invaders* this book completes a pleasantly leisurely study of British diplomatic relations with the Sultans of Zanzibar—till the eighties of last century the only recognisable power on that coast. Sir John Kirk, British agent at Zanzibar for most of twenty years, makes an attractive hero, through whom British influence, it is not unjustly claimed, was principally exercised to ensure the suppression of the slave trade. After a long trial of "restriction" British pressure in 1873 obliged the Sultan Barghash to agree to prohibit the export of slaves beyond his own borders. Thereafter Kirk's tactful guidance was concentrated on the difficult task of making the Sultan's authority effective at least on the coast belt of his wide and ill-defined domain. Presently the theme changes to a lament that in spite of all a large half of East Africa was

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Although the above restrictions do not operate until after our issue dated October 7th, the newsagents are being asked at once to revise their orders. Readers are therefore urged to assist themselves and us by placing a definite order THIS WEEK.

NEW STATESMAN AND NATION
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eventually " lost " to the Empire. The idea seems to be that under Kirk things were well on the way towards the evolution of an " indirectly " ruled British Protectorate. Yet to have ruled by the approved indirect method would have been difficult since the Zanzibaris were not only inveterate slave traders but alien to the people they ruled. The " German irruption " after 1884 at any rate completely upset the apple cart and only a last minute effort " saved " what is now Kenya. Undoubtedly German methods betrayed the unpleasant Prussian touch. So far this account is topical and by no means merely tendentious. Yet the conventional British view is too evident to make the book wholly satisfying. Kirk gets well-deserved justice, but General Gordon is excused for a strange escapade, whereas H. M. Stanley is too obviously not one of the elect. We are not only told again that British claims rested on " our longer and wider training in the difficult art of governing backward peoples," but more surprisingly, with equally little international tact, that our disinterested services against slavery merited a territorial reward. Incidentally the exclusive stress on the slave trade might obscure the significance of Professor Coupland's evidence that the development of a more legitimate East African trade was very largely the work of British Indians. Till so late as 1883 even Kirk's consulate at Zanzibar was actually under the India Office—a fact which has some little bearing on questions affecting the claims of Indians in present-day Kenya.

BOOKS TO COME

Messrs. Faber and Faber, who are among the firms continuing to publish in London, announce for September 21st a highly topical book, *Warfare*, by the distinguished German exile, Ludwig Renn. It is a complete history of warfare in relation to society right up to the present date. Renn, it will be remembered, was an officer in a crack German regiment during the Great War and has been fighting recently in the International Brigade in Spain. He deals as an expert—though his book is designed to be read by the layman—with the strategy, tactics and weapons of war. His principal thesis is that warfare is not distinct from man's normal activities but is in the mainflow of his social development. He argues that all the revolutionary changes which have taken place in warfare are conditioned by such development and draws his evidence from our own times.

On September 28th, Faber will publish a new volume of poems by Michael Roberts, *Orion Marches*.

Will people continue to read thrillers in wartime? In view of the fact that war is as boring in one aspect as it is over-exciting in another, they probably will. It is good news to hear that Routledge will publish on September 29th the first of a series of translations of the " *romans policiers* " (a *genre* quite distinct from the English detective story) of Jean Simenon. Its title is *The Patience of Maigret*. Six further volumes of Inspector Maigret's adventures will follow.

On September 26th, Allen and Unwin will publish a batch of books including Ford Madox Ford's *The March of Literature*, *The First Rescue Party* by Karel Capek, *Mahatma Gandhi : Reflections of his Life and Work*, edited by Professor Sir S. Radhakrishnan, *Pre-Fascist Italy* by Margot Hentze, and *Mary Queen of Scots* by M. P. Willcocks, a popular biography which treats more fully than usual Mary's nineteen years of imprisonment and is based on the latest research.

The book on Gandhi is designed as a tribute to his seventieth birthday, which falls this month, and consists of a series of essays on his life and work by distinguished contributors who include Jawarhalal Nehru, Professor Albert Einstein, Lord Halifax, Professor Gilbert Murray, C. F. Andrews, Romain Rolland, Stefan Zweig and Herman Keyserling.

Karel Capek's last book is a mining novel, describing two or three days of rescue work after an explosion in a mine as they are seen through the eyes of a boy.

In *Pre-Fascist Italy*, an account of the rise and fall of the parliamentary regime in Italy, the author traces the history of Italian democracy to the time of Mussolini's march on Rome. Dr. Hentze analyses the main reasons for the breakdown of representative government in 1922.

Heinemanns announce for September 18th a new book by the French airman, Antoine de Saint Exupery, author of *Night Flight*. In his description of dangerous flights over the Sahara, Libya, parts of South America and during which his adventures included a headlong crash in the desert, the author presents a picture of the world in which the airman lives and relates his physical experiences to his nature as poet and philosopher.

On the same day, Heinemanns will publish three books postponed from dates previously announced : Graham Greene's *The Confidential Agent*, Noel Coward's *To Step Aside* and Clemence Dane's *The Arrogant History of White Ben*. On September 25th they will publish a new Irish novel by Lord Dunsany, *The Story of Mona Sheehy*.

A soothing anthology, *The Jackdaw's Nest*, made by Gerald Bullett, is published this week (September 15th) by Macmillan. Mr. Bullett, in selecting his favourite stories, poems, essays and miscellanea, claims to have excluded everything made familiar by earlier anthologists. It is a book, he says, for reading in the evening and especially in bed, and contains therefore nothing calculated to assault the emotions and lacerate the nerves to no purpose.

Further light on President Wilson is shed by the *Memoirs of Mrs. Woodrow Wilson* to be published by Putnam on September 18th. In giving an account of her husband's private life, his tastes, habits of work and relationships, Mrs. Wilson displays the President's personal reaction to the great events in which he was involved. It has been described in America as the book of a devoted wife, a fierce partisan and an extremely feminine woman.

A new Chinese novel, *Four-Part Setting*, by Ann Bridge, will be published by Chatto and Windus on September 28th.

For Monday Messrs. Secker & Warburg promise us *The Intruder*, Sir Basil Bartlett's translation of *Asmodée*, by François Mauriac. Produced at the Gate Theatre and then publicly this play was described by critics as one of the best of our time. A novel from the same firm should be specially interesting, Anna Reiner's *The Wall*, an account of life in Nazi Germany that has been very successful in the original German, when published at Amsterdam under the title of *Manja*.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

About Motoring

OUR CARS IN WAR

MOST motorists expected very stringent rationing of petrol in war ; in the event the initial allowance is from four to ten gallons per month. This represents a very substantial cut in mileage for all private owners. Most of us average between 500 and 1,000 miles per month ; and on the ration an average monthly mileage will not exceed 150. It automatically follows that it is hardly worth while to keep a car in use where other modes of transport are available. Consider the example of a man who owns a 20 h.p. car with a fuel consumption of 20 miles per gallon, residing in a town. He cannot cover more than 2,400 miles in the year, and with high tax and insurance charges his running cost per mile will be far higher than taxi hire, whilst he is requested not to use his car at all after sunset, is liable to be immobilised for hours at any moment by air raid alarms, and runs very definite risks of accidents by driving after dark when circumstances compel him to be out at night. Furthermore, with rising prices and fixed or reduced incomes, many owners will not be able to afford to motor in war, whilst their cars will usually be quite unsaleable.

It seems probable that a great many cars will automatically be laid up for the duration, and the owner who has at his disposal a private garage for which he pays no separate rent will soon be envied. The owner who rents a garage will desire to save its cost, and it is possible to store a car in a garden or drive without its suffering any serious injury. The most vulnerable component is the accumulator, which should be removed at once if it is all new. If it is oldish, expenditure upon its maintenance is perhaps hardly justifiable, as its working life does not normally exceed a couple of years ; but a new accumulator should either be charged at home off the mains, or entrusted to a competent electrician, such as a radio dealer, under a maintenance contract. It is worth mentioning that there will be a miniature run on battery-operated radio sets before long, since when air raids commence in earnest, the mains will often be out of action in certain areas ; and a car accumulator can be adapted to operate radio receivers. The next vulnerable items are the tyres, which will soon suffer if the weight of a stationary car rests upon them in a fixed position. A carpenter should be engaged to shape three small baulks of timber on which the car can be raised, using its own jack for the fourth support ; the tyres can then be left on the rims if the garage is cool and dark, but should be stored in a cool dark place if the garage is warm and sunlit. The coachwork should then be thoroughly cleaned and wax-polished, a process which may need repeating in some climates every three months. All bright parts should be protected from damp and rust, including those under the bonnet and inside the car. Bright metal inside the car will not suffer in dry places if it is wax-polished. External bright surfaces are best covered with a thick film of vaseline, which can be warmed till fluid, and painted on with a brush. If the garage is not dry and warm (as when it is structurally part of a centrally-heated house) it will usually pay to remove the ignition coil or magneto, and store it separately in a warm dry cupboard. It is wise to remember that there is a faint risk of certain electrical failures setting a car on fire ; this does not exist if the battery is fitted with what is known as a " master switch," located so close to the accumulator that when this master switch is in its " off " position, current only flows in a very few inches of very thick cable. Comparatively few cars possess such " master " switches ; and if only a dashboard switch is provided, current may flow through a number of comparatively flimsy electrical gadgets, and a short-circuit—possibly induced by damp after months of storage—may

"Yes," replied the Marquise, tapping her magnificent incisors with a priceless paper-knife. "My people always keep their hair and lose their teeth." "My dear mother saved my own teeth from the family fate; made me acquire the habit of brushing them night and morning. Do you know, darling," continued she, laying her famous emerald ring earnestly upon the visitor's knee, "I learned to associate a tube of Euthymol with the back of a hairbrush long before I thought of it in connection with the front of a toothbrush. Happy, happy days," sighed she, stirring gently upon her silken cushions . . . "Ah me! Years and tubes—tubes and years. And I've still got them all—not the tubes, darling, the teeth!" Try this scientific dentifrice for yourself. A large tube costs 1s. 3d. from any chemist.

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start a serious fire. The removal of the accumulator is an absolute protection against such disasters, which are trebly perilous if the garage is to all intents and purposes a room of the dwelling house, or closely adjacent thereto.

Treated in this fashion a car can be stored in the open for prolonged periods without sustaining any serious depreciation, provided it is completely covered by a tarpaulin or heavy Willesden canvas cover, stoutly pegged down to the ground all round the car. Wherever the car is stored, its fuel and water tanks should first be drained, to avert the risks of fire in air raids, or of cracked metal due to freezing. Veteran owners will remember from 1918 that a war is followed by a period of lavish spending, coupled with a great scarcity of luxurious commodities; and it is well worth taking considerable trouble to coax a disused car through the war without deterioration for the double reason that new cars will be unobtainable for a long period after the return of peace, and that roadworthy cars will then command quite gratifying prices for a brief period.

Upholstery will not suffer from indoor storage, provided any condensed moisture is removed at regular intervals; but if the car is kept out of doors under a tarpaulin all cushions should be taken indoors. Those who are compelled to use their cars at night under blackout conditions should earnestly consider whether their eyesight is reliable under such conditions, especially in view of the fact that during winter fog and rain will intensify the difficulty of following a road or sighting obstacles. The rural motorist will seldom enjoy the guidance and comfort of the central white lines which have already been painted upon all main and secondary roads. We do not yet know how far the wearing of gas masks will be forced upon drivers in any area, but only the most pluperfect vision is equal to handling any motor vehicle under the dual handicap of a blackout and a gas mask; when fog or rain adds a third handicap, it is quite certain that nobody will take the wheel except under the very direst compulsion. Even without gas masks, fog or rain, many drivers have got hopelessly lost in moderately familiar neighbourhoods, and in spite of the huge reduction in road congestion, there have been plenty of accidents. Every night since September 3rd when the moon has been obscured, I have encountered drivers wobbling along in obvious confusion on the wrong side of main roads, adorned with the usual white guiding line; and pedestrians are invisible till one is right upon them. The pedal cycle is infinitely the pleasantest form of personal night transport for those who are physically equal to its demands; it is also the safest, as with a red rear light it suffers no great risk of being rammed, and its normal speed is too low for its rider to suffer injury if he makes a mistake.

All external lamps should preferably be removed from a disused car; the interior may be airproof, but its delicate surfaces will suffer irretrievably from months of damp, if damp should penetrate.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 499

Set by Roger Marvell

One immediate result of war is a proliferation of Busybodies. A first prize of £2 2*s.* and a second prize of 10*s.* 6*d.* are offered for the best verses (not more than twelve lines) "Upon A Busybody."

No. 500

Set by G. W. Stonier

We offer the usual prizes for the best opening paragraph for the memoirs of one of the following: Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Marie Lloyd, Dr. Buchman, Landru, Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Groucho Marx, Dr. Arnold, Joan of Arc, Epstein, Mrs. Beeton. Limit, 200 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Sept. 22nd.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 496

Set by Frederick Laws

The philosophies of Berkeley, Coué, and Mendel have been outlined in limericks. The usual Prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea are offered for the most memorable limericks expounding the Contribution to Thought of *two* of the following:—Darwin, Lamarck, Dr. Buchman, Father Divine, Sir James Jeans, J. B. Priestley, Karl Marx, Freud, Adler, Mary Baker Eddy, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Sir James Frazer, James Joyce or Godfrey Winn.

Report by Frederick Laws

This was a very difficult competition indeed. The anonymous authors of the many limericks exclusively kept alive by oral tradition are no mean versifiers. It is far far easier to write a ballade or a sonnet or a four-line epigram or a roundel than a limerick. The disappointment of the reader's legitimate expectation of impropriety is an added difficulty. And it is only in the heat of controversy that a philosopher's contribution to thought can be boiled down into five jigging lines. Nevertheless competitors nobly struggled against these limitations. Only one seemed quite uncritical of the selected thinker's message:

The tenets of Buchman are: Change
Into something more rich and more strange
By pure honest Love,
And Guidance above,
To find Moral Rearmament's range.

M. E. M.

Mrs. W. Grover combined the clerihew and the limerick almost successfully in:

Darwin was right on the brink—
(With evidence fearfully strong)
When his wife said "I think
There's a missing link,
But, of course, dear, I may be wrong."

Professor Jeans and Dr. Freud were the most popular subjects; both suffered much injustice. The only Priestley had point:

If Time and our Dreams as they say
Intermix like events in his play,
According to Priestley
Life is not so beastly
To-morrow might be Yesterday.

C. W. Hopper

R. C. Owen began and ended well with:

Said philosopher-physicist Jeans,
How many or few are five beans?
Friend Einstein says four,
Five, six, or more,
But I'm blowed if I know what he means.

Ellen Evans, Charles Best, and Towanbucket deserve honourable mention for one good potted philosopher each. But the first prize must certainly go to Allan M. Laing for verse and malice, and the second to J. C. B. Date, mainly for verse.

FIRST PRIZE

When an obstinate fellow of Fife
Persisted in loving his wife,
Denying obsessions,
Bad dreams and repressions,
The Freudians feared for his life.

There was a young chap with a kink
Who boasted: "I don't need to think:
God-guided I am
Through the blood of the Lamb
Not to mention the Oxford Group, Inc."

SECOND PRIZE

Sir James Jeans's Contribution to Thought:

To algebra God is inclined
The world is a thought in his mind,
It seems so erratic
Because it's quadratic,
And the roots are not easy to find.

Professor Freud's Contribution to Thought:

Though your dreams may seem normal and right,
They bring horrible thoughts to the light,
You can only be sure
That you're perfectly pure,
If you dream about nothing all night.

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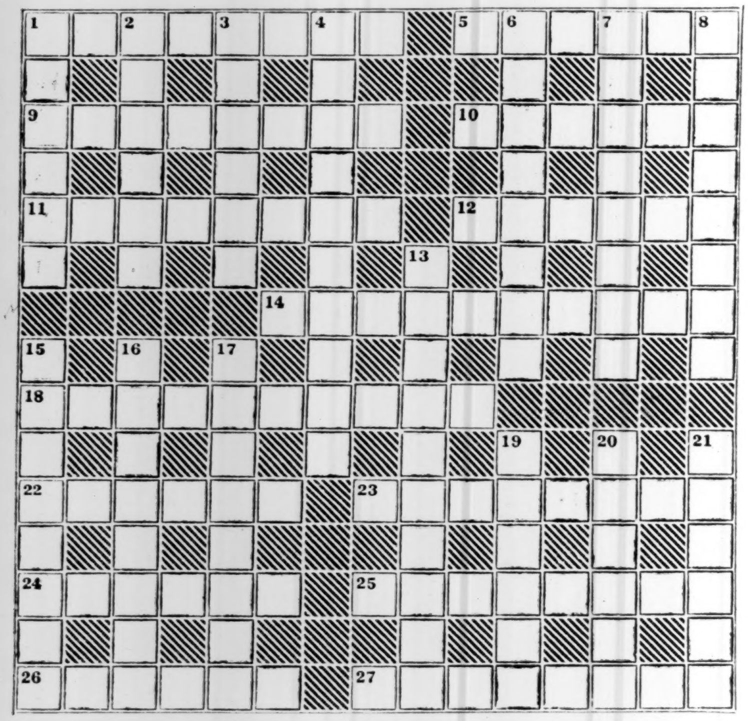
WEEK-END CROSSWORD 497

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mrs. Ard, Balahaigh, Etchingham, Sussex.

ACROSS

1. Reverse to the entrance. (8)
5. The street by the river. (6)
9. Is it fought in the schoolrooms? (8)
10. Vessels that dispense summary punishment. (6)
11. Conducted round a German armament factory. (8)
12. The Forth river covers it in its course. (6)
14. Enables sedentary persons to keep a close look-out. (10)
18. Valley showmen talk of? (10)
22. Disquieting sounds. (6)
23. Politician and cricketer need false teeth it seems. (8)
24. It's no drawback to go towards the front. (6)
25. For whipping up poultry production. (8)
26. The angler hopes that the fish will jump to it. (6)
27. Like a native of Damascus in another country. (8)

DOWN

1. It is usually strapped on. (6)
2. In this one might sit still in France or moving in England. (6)
3. Record made by an evangelist. (6)
4. Sailors always hoped for a good blow out from them. (10)
6. Thomas takes a bird of prey on the warpath. (8)
7. Record holder. (8)
8. The C.I.D.'s sets are made of it. (8)
13. No good for an early morning scramble. (10)
15. You may give it a good spin. (8)
16. A moving feature of London's transport system. (8)
17. The rebel car was smashed up. (8)
19. There's no coming and going in this street. (6)
20. This island gets a blow in its back. (6)
21. Start 13 up perhaps. (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

T	O	B	I	T	▨	▨	A	B	S	T	R	A	C	T
U	▨	E	▨	R	▨	S	▨	E	▨	E	▨	S	▨	E
R	E	D	C	O	A	T	▨	L	A	M	E	L	L	A
N	▨	S	▨	C	▨	A	▨	I	▨	P	▨	O	▨	U
C	R	O	S	S	I	N	G	S	W	E	E	P	E	R
O	▨	C	▨	E	▨	D	▨	H	▨	S	▨	E	▨	N
A	R	K	▨	▨	▨	I	N	A	P	T	▨	▨	▨	▨
T	▨	S	▨	H	▨	N	▨	B	▨	S	▨	C	▨	S
▨	▨	▨	▨	A	N	G	L	E	▨	▨	▨	A	C	T
S	▨	S	▨	T	▨	O	▨	A	▨	O	▨	N	▨	R
T	A	K	E	S	P	R	E	C	E	D	E	N	C	E
A	▨	A	▨	T	▨	D	▨	O	▨	D	▨	I	▨	N
R	E	T	R	A	C	E	▨	N	O	S	E	B	A	G
T	▨	E	▨	N	▨	R	▨	S	▨	O	▨	A	▨	T
S	I	D	E	D	I	S	H	▨	▨	N	E	L	E	H

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 413

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

WAR MARKETS—RICHARD THOMAS

IT can hardly be said that there is yet any real dealing on the Stock Exchange. Jobbers are concerned mainly with the levelling up of their positions for the Settlement, which has been postponed until September 21st. They are not yet prepared to take stock on their books or to go short in any real quantity. What little market there is in ordinary shares is therefore extremely thin and erratic. Nevertheless the trends of the markets are becoming plain. Investors are clearly not disposed for the time being to buy their old investment favourites in the tobacco, brewery, electricity supply and store share markets, being afraid that extra taxation and rising costs will reduce the dividend margins. In spite of the fact that the inflation of consuming power through swollen A.R.P. services is probably increasing the turnover of Imperial Tobacco, Woolworth and the leading breweries, the equity shares of these companies are declining. Department stores are clearly hit hard by the evacuation. Moreover, in the case of all concerns whose stocks are large in relation to turnover, the incidence of the compulsory insurance scheme will be severely felt. Here are a few representative shares:

	Pre-War Price	Price Sept. 13	Last Div.	Gross Div. Yield %
Imperial Tobacco £1 ..	$6\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{3}{4}$	25% t.f.	£6 0 0
Bass £1	$6\frac{1}{8}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$	25%	£6 5 6
Woolworth 5/-	$3\frac{1}{4}$	$2\frac{11}{16}$	65%	£6 1 0
County of London £1 ..	40/-	31/-	$10\frac{1}{2}$%	£6 15 6

There are, of course, special reasons for the decline in electricity supply shares, particularly those of companies in the London and other evacuated areas. The few investors who are now bold enough to take the investment field are confining their attention to what are loosely termed "war stocks," such as copper (Rhodesian), tin, lead-zinc (Australian), shipping, oil and select engineering shares, although the armament and aircraft shares are being left severely alone. In the next table I give a few examples of "war stocks," illustrating the divergency of behaviour.

	Pre-war Price	Sept. 13	Last Div.	Gross Div. Yield
Rhokana £1	$11\frac{3}{8}$	$13\frac{3}{8}$	$62\frac{1}{2}$%	£5 10 0
Zinc Corp. 10/-	60/-	$3\frac{9}{16}$	30%	£4 15 6
Shell £1	$4\frac{1}{4}$	$4\frac{9}{16}$	20% t.f.	£6 1 0
Furness Withy £1 ..	18/-	24/3	4%	£3 6 0
Bristol Aeroplane 10/- ..	17/-	14/6	10%	£7 0 0

There are, of course, dangers in running after these war stocks. We have to expect an increasing amount of control of prices and profits to be imposed upon industry by the Government during the next few months and there is the emergency budget to come forward which might completely upset the investment trends of to-day. And what is to happen to gilt-edged stocks? Equity share yields must be related to the long-term rate of interest and the trend of the gilt-edged market is downward, thanks to the lack of Treasury support, the unnecessary rise in Bank rate and the fall in the dollar exchange. Dealings in Government stocks, at the moment of writing, are almost impossible except in tiny amounts. Orders to sell are piling up and the minimum prices, officially established without being officially supported, are not likely to be maintained—especially when the need of many undertakings to raise cash for commodity insurance premiums is taken into account.

* * *

The question how far extra taxation will eat into profits is obviously relevant to the position of Richard Thomas, whose progress was reviewed by Sir William Firth at the annual general meeting last Friday. So far as the past is concerned, Sir William was able to announce that during the past three years profits had totalled £4,469,197, against a prospectus estimate of £4,750,000—a not unsatisfactory achievement. The concern's steel-producing capacity is now one-tenth of the entire ingot capacity of the country, and in present circumstances there is no cause to fear under-employment of plant. Subject to taxation the current year's earnings should show an increase, but shareholders will appreciate that the general reserve must be restored before dividends are distributed. It is already clear that many industrial boards intend to pursue a cautious dividend policy.

Company Meeting

RICHARD THOMAS AND COMPANY LTD.

THE 90th ordinary general meeting of Richard Thomas and Co., Ltd., was held on September 8th in London.

Sir William Firth (the chairman), in the course of his speech, said: The year under review has been a disappointing one to our shareholders as indeed it has been an anxious one for your directors who were confronted with three problems—The liquidation of surplus stocks accumulated as an insurance against the risk of war; a demand for both sheets and tinplates much below the average of recent years, and supervision of the completion of the development work at the ore fields, the completion of the plant, the training of the workpeople and the running in of the plant.

Despite the disappointing result, it is not without interest to note that the profits for the three years ending March last, after taking care of these heavy starting up expenses and losses on stocks and extraordinary and capital expenditure written off and excluding credits extraneous to the period, totalled £4,469,197, out of which £1,200,000 has been set aside for depreciation. These figures compare with the prospectus profit estimate for the 3 years of £4,750,000 and a depreciation allocation of £1,050,000.

If it is realised the prospectus estimate of profits did not take into account the 9 to 12 months' delay in the delivery of machinery by contractors, but did take into account a contribution from the new plant which did not mature, it will be recognised that the actual profits earned during the 3 years falling short of prospectus estimate by only £281,000 was not altogether an unsatisfactory performance. In making this three years comparison I am, of course, not overlooking the fact that the prospectus trend was upwards over the period, a result which has been spoiled by delays and circumstances beyond our control.

It may be thought that, in view of the poor demand experienced during the year under review, even if the new plant had been ready at contracted dates, the total profits for the 3 years would still have fallen short of the estimate; this, however, would be incorrect, because since the close of the year under review it has been proved that the new works are capable of producing at a cost substantially lower than it is possible to attain in old type plant and the product produced is vastly superior.

The profits of the previous year would have carried the cost of training the men and starting up, but the profits of the year under review would have benefited through the lower Ebbw Vale production cost and the greater volume of business resulting from our ability to supply superior qualities which would have increased the demand for our products, and I have no hesitation in claiming that our gross profits would then have exceeded the prospectus estimate.

From the point of view of the company's balance sheet our position is sounder than at the time the new capital was issued, because the new works are now operating at a profit and since April, 1936, we have retained in the business £1,200,000 *via* depreciation reserve and the £1,250,000 premium, less redemption and issue expenses, and we have charged to profit and loss account a substantial amount represented by interest on the new and (up to March 31st) unremunerative capital, while our old type plant is as efficient as it was at prospectus date.

It would be unwise in this period of uncertainty to attempt to forecast what the current year's new profits will be. Our existing profit margins on tinplates produced in our old type mills are greatly reduced, owing to the substantial advance in the price of tin from £170 per ton in April, 1938, to £230 to-day—the whole of which we have taken care of in our cost, but on the assumption that our total profits are maintained at the rate of recent months I am entitled to say that there is no ground for supposing the net profits of the current year will not substantially exceed the £367,429 earmarked for transfer to general reserve account, and this, after providing an additional £210,000 for depreciation, bringing depreciation allocation up to £650,000 for the year.

Your company now possesses one of the finest plants in the world, and our steel capacity is equal to 10 per cent. of the total ingot capacity of the country, and some 50 per cent. of this ingot capacity has a book value approximating 25*s.* 3*d.* per ingot ton, which is a very low figure.

Further, in normal times, i.e., in times of cheap scrap, this low-capital-cost plant is capable of producing ingots on an f.o.b. basis that compares favourably with any integrated modern plant in this country. The elasticity of this 50 per cent. low capital-cost-steel-plant is not generally recognised. It consists of 6 completely independent units, each with an average output of 120,000 tons of ingots per annum.

Lest any of my remarks made in an attempt to give you a true value picture of your property should be interpreted by you as optimistic, I would remind you that in times of poor demand our profits must shrink and that we have no control over world conditions or world demand. The report was unanimously adopted.